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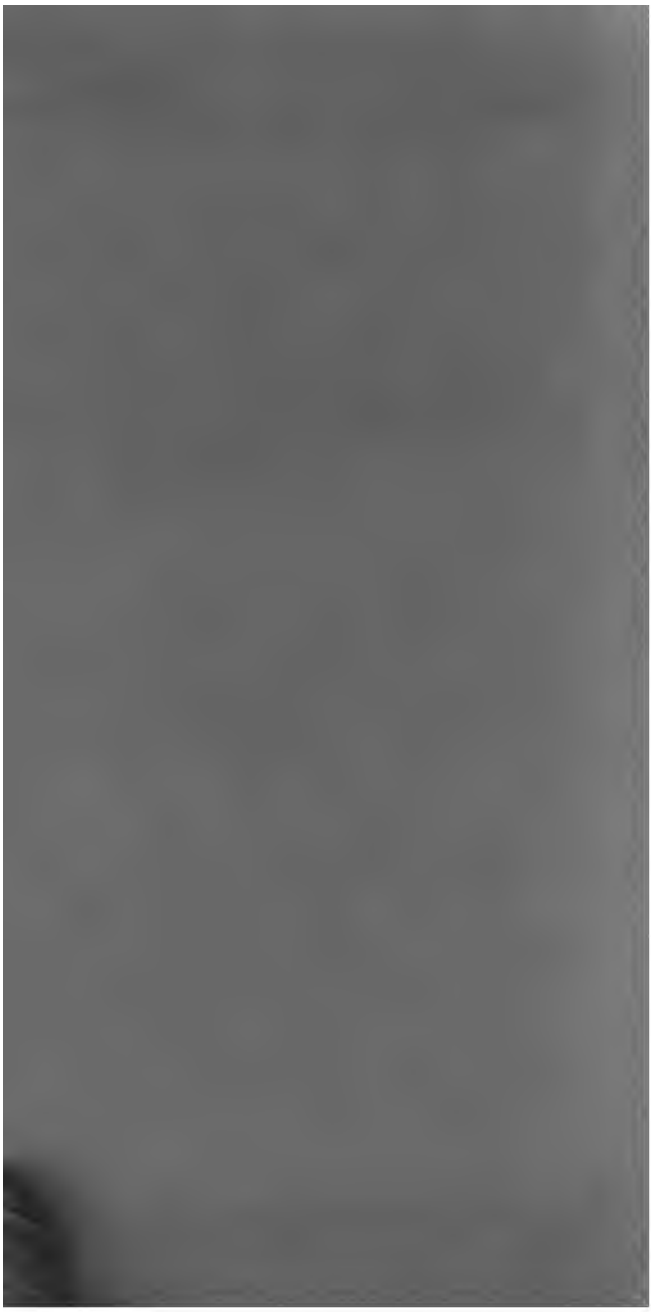
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THE

APOSTOLICAL

AND

PRIMITIVE CHURCH,

POPULAR IN ITS GOVERNMENT, AND SIMPLE IN ITS WORSHIP.

BY

LYMAN COLEMAN.

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY

DR. AUGUSTUS NEANDER,
PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN.

Third Edition.

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PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

The object of the author, in the following work, is to commend to the consideration of the reader the admirable simplicity of the government and worship of the primitive church, in opposition to the polity and ceremonials of prelacy.

In the prosecution of this object, he has sought, under the direction of the best guides, to go to the original sources, and first and chiefly to draw from them. On the constitution and government of the church, none have written with greater ability, or with more extensive and searching erudition, than Mosheim, Planck, Neander and Rothe. These have been his principal reliance; and after these a great variety of authors.

If the reader object, that the authorities cited are beyond his reach, or are recorded in a language to him unknown, the writer can only say, that he has endeavored to collect the best authorities, wherever they might be found. When embodied in the pages of the work, they are given in a translation; and, if of special importance, the original is inserted in the margin, for the examination of the scholar.

The work has been prepared with an anxious endeavor to sustain the positions advanced, by references sufficiently copious, pertinent and authoritative; and yet to guard against an ostentatious affectation in the accumulation of authorities. Several hundred have indeed been entered in these pages; but many more, that have fallen under the eye of the writer, have been rejected. Much labor, of which the reader probably will make

small account, has been expended in an endeavor to authenticate those that are retained, and to give him an explicit direction to them. The work has been written with studied brevity, and a uniform endeavor to make it at once concise, yet complete, and suggestive of principles.

In the prosecution of these labors, the author has received much encouragement and many important suggestions, from friends, whose services he holds in grateful remembrance. For such favors he is particularly indebted to Professor Park, of the Theological Seminary in this place.

Above all, it is the author's grateful duty publicly to express his acknowledgments to Dr. Neander, not only for his Introductory Essay, but for the uniform kindness of his counsels in the preparation of the several parts of this work. The writer can say nothing to add to the reputation of this eminent scholar, distinguished alike for his private virtues, his public services, and his vast and varied erudition. He can only express his obligations for the advantages derived from the contributions and counsels of this great historian, for which the reader, in common with the writer of the following pages, will owe his grateful acknowledgments. For the sentiments here expressed, however, the writer is alone responsible.

The translation of the Introduction was made in Berlin; and after a careful comparison with the original by Dr. Neander, received his unqualified approbation. It is, therefore, to be received as an authentic expression of his sentiments on the several topics to which it relates.

In the preparation of this work, the author has studiously sought to write neither as a Congregationalist, nor as a Presbyterian exclusively; but as the advocate of a free and popular government in the church; and of simplicity in worship, in harmony with the free spirit of the Christian religion. It is enough for the author, and, as he would hope, for both Congregationalists and Presbyterians, if the church is set free from the bondage of a prelatical hierarchy; and trained, by simple and expressive

rites, to worship God in spirit and in truth. In opposition to the assumptions of prelacy, there is common ground sufficient for all the friends of a popular government in the church of Christ to occupy. In the topics discussed in the following pages they have equal interest, whether they would adopt a purely democratical or a representative form of government as the best means of defending the popular rights of the church. We heartily wish indeed for all true churchmen a closer conformity to the primitive pattern in government and in worship; but we have no controversy even with them on minor points, provided we may still be united with them in the higher principles of Christian fellowship and love. The writer has the happiness to number among the members of the Episcopal church some of his most cherished friends, to whose sentiments he would be sorry to do violence by anything that may appear in these pages.

Indeed, the great controversy of the day is not with Protestant Episcopacy, as such; it is rather with FORMALISM. Formalism wherever seen, by whatever name it is known,—this is the great antagonist principle of spiritual Christianity. Here the church is brought to a crisis, great and fearful in prospect, and momentous, for good or for evil, in its final results. The struggle at issue is between a spiritual and a formal religion;—against a religion which substitutes the outward form for the inward spirit; which exalts sacraments, ordinances and rites, into the place of Christ himself; and disguises, under the covering of imposing ceremonials, the great doctrines of the cross.

The church is at issue with this religion under the forms of high church Prelacy, "Puseyism," and Popery. The present struggle began in England; but when or where or how it will end, who can tell? Dr. Pusey himself declares that on the issue of it, "hangs the destiny of the church of England." The Tractarians all avow,—"that two schemes of doctrine, the Genevan and the Catholic, are probably for the last time struggling within that church." But the conflict is not confined to England.

The signs of the times, everywhere darkly portentous, presage a similar conflict to the church of Christ universally.

In this eventful crisis we are urgently pressed to a renewed examination of the apostolical and primitive polity of the church in government and in worship; for under cover of these the warfare of formalism is now waged. These are the prominent points, both of attack and of defence, to which the eye of the minister, the theological student, and the intelligent Christian of every name, should be turned. Let them fall back on that spiritual Christianity which Christ and his apostles taught. Let them, in doctrine, in discipline, and in worship, entrench themselves within the strongholds of this religion; and here, in calm reliance upon the great Captain of our salvation, let them await the issue of the contest.

Hitherto the great body of the people have been left to gather up information upon this branch of religious knowledge, as they could; and the most have been content with a blind acquiescence in the customs of their own church. A due degree of knowledge on this subject is apparently possessed by very few of our leading men, and is by no means the property generally of clergymen and theological students.

To what purpose is it now merely to follow the history of the church, century by century, through the recital of her sufferings? The times are changed, and a corresponding change is required in the study of ecclesiastical history. This study is chiefly important, for existing exigencies, to illustrate the usages, the rites, the government of the church, and the perversion of these to promote the ends of bigotry, intolerance and superstition. Besides, we have seen, for some years past, an influence stealing silently upon the public mind, and alluring many young clergymen and candidates for the ministry from the fold of their fathers;—an influence to be counteracted by a better understanding of our own government and worship. Bishop Griswold stated in 1841, that of "two hundred and eighty persons ordained by him, *two hundred and seven* came from other deno-

minations." And another bishop says, "From the most accurate investigation that can be made, I am led to believe, that about *three hundred* clergymen and licentiates of other denominations, have within the last *thirty years*, sought the ministerial commission from the hands of bishops of that church; and, that at least *two-thirds* were not originally, by education, Episcopalians, but have come from other folds." These facts afford matter for serious inquiry. These three hundred were not originally Episcopalians. Were they, "*by education*," anything else? Would they have strayed away in such numbers from their own fold, had they been duly instructed in the principles of that order to which they originally belonged?

The author is deeply sensible of the magnitude and difficulty of the work which he has undertaken; and with no affected modesty, avows the unfeigned diffidence with which he commends it to the public. Would it were worthier, and better fitted for the great end proposed by it. But he has done what he could, and finds his reward in the consciousness of having labored honestly in a righteous cause, and in the hope of doing something for the promotion of that religious system which shall enable the true worshippers to worship the Father in spirit and in truth. Such a religious system, he believes most firmly, must ever find its truest expression in rites of worship few and simple, and in a government administered in every part and every particular by the people;—in a ritual without a prayer-book; and a church without a bishop.

Andover, February, 1844.

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

In this edition the plan of the work, together with the general course of the argument and illustration, remains unaltered. Its pages, however, have been carefully revised by the author. The result of this revision will appear in various additions and improvements; especially, it is hoped, in a general freedom from those inaccuracies of expression, and those errors of the press, which circumstances rendered unavoidable in the first edition. The author has not been able to superintend the printing of the present edition; but this trust has been so faithfully discharged by the gentlemen who kindly assumed the supervision of the press, that he has no occasion to regret his own absence. With grateful acknowledgments to those gentlemen for their important services, and to the various friends who have interested themselves in the work, and from whom he has received many valuable suggestions, the author has the pleasure again to commend the "Primitive Church," to the consideration of the public.

Auburn, N. Y., August, 1844.

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INTRODUCTION,

BY

DR. AUGUSTUS NEANDER,

PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN, CONSISTORIAL COUNSELLOR, ETC.

IN compliance with the request of my worthy friend, the Rev. Mr. Coleman, I am happy to accompany his proposed work, on the Constitution and Worship of the apostolical and primitive church, with some preliminary remarks. I regard it as one of the remarkable signs of the times, that Christians, separated from each other by land and by sea, by language and government, are becoming more closely united in the consciousness that they are only different members of one universal church, grounded and built on the rock Christ Jesus. And it is with the hope of promoting this catholic union, that I gladly improve this opportunity to address my Christian brethren beyond the waters, on some important subjects of common interest to the church of Christ.

This is not the proper place to express in detail, and to defend my own views upon the controverted topics which, as I have reason to expect from the respected author, will be the subject of an extended, thorough and impartial examination in his proposed work. My own sentiments have

already been expressed, in a work which, I am happy to learn, is offered to the English reader in a translation by my friend, the Rev. Mr. Ryland, of Northampton, in England.[1] I have only time and space, in this place, briefly to express the results of former inquiries, which, with the reasons for them, have on other occasions already been given to the public.

It is of the utmost importance, to keep ever in view the difference between the economy of the Old Testament and that of the New. The neglect of this has given rise to the grossest errors, and to divisions, by which those who ought to be united together in the bonds of Christian love, have been sundered from each other. In the Old Testament, everything relating to the kingdom of God was estimated by *outward forms*, and promoted by specific *external rites*. In the New, everything is made to depend upon what is *internal* and *spiritual*. Other foundation, as the apostle Paul has said, can no man lay than that is laid. Upon this the Christian church at first was grounded, and upon this alone, in all time to come, must it be reared anew and compacted together. Faith in Jesus of Nazareth, the Saviour of the world, and union with him, a participation in that salvation which cometh through him, — this is that inward principle, that unchangeable foundation, on which the Christian church essentially rests. But whenever, instead of making the existence of the church to depend on this in-

[1] History of the Planting and Training of the Christian Church, by the Apostles, by Dr. A. NEANDER, Ordinary Professor of Theology, in the University of Berlin, Consistorial Counsellor; translated from the third edition, by J. E. Ryland.

ward principle alone, the necessity of some outward form is asserted as an indispensable means of grace, we readily perceive that the purity of its character is impaired. The spirit of the Old Testament is commingled with that of the New. Neither Christ nor the apostles, have given any unchangeable law on the subject. Where two or three are gathered together in my name, says Christ, there am I in the midst of them. This coming together in his name, he assures us, alone renders the assembly well pleasing in his sight, whatever be the different forms of government under which his people meet.

The apostle Paul says indeed, Eph. 4: 11, that Christ gave to the church certain offices, through which he operated with his Spirit, and its attendant gifts. But assuredly Paul did not mean to say that Christ, during his abode on earth, appointed these offices in the church, or authorized the form of government that was necessarily connected with them. All the offices here mentioned, with the single exception of that of the apostles, were instituted by the apostles themselves, after our Lord's ascension. In making these appointments, they acted, as they did in everything else, only as the organs of Christ. Paul, therefore, very justly ascribes to Christ himself what was done by the apostles in this instance as his agents. But the apostles themselves have given no law, requiring that any such form of government as is indicated in this passage should be perpetual. Under the guidance of the Spirit of God, they gave the church this particular organization, which, while it was best adapted to the circumstances and relations of the church at that time, was also best suited to the extension of

the churches in their peculiar condition, and for the development of the inward principles of their communion. But forms may change with every change of circumstances. Many of the offices mentioned in that passage, either were entirely unknown at a later period, or existed in relations one to another entirely new.[2]

Whenever at a later period, also, any form of church government has arisen out of a series of events according to the direction of divine providence, and is organized and governed with regard to the Lord's will, he may be said, himself, to have established it, and to operate through it, by his Spirit; without which nothing pertaining to the church

[2] One peculiar office, that of the prophets, in process of time ceased in the church, while something analogous to the gift of prophecy still remained; indeed it might be easily shown that the prophetic office continued at that early period, so long as it was necessary for the establishment of the Christian church, under its peculiar exigencies and relations. Pastors and teachers are mentioned in this passage, in the same connection. Their office, which related to the government of particular churches, is distinguished from that of those who had been mentioned before, and whose immediate object was the extension of the Christian church in general. And yet a distinction is also made between these pastors and teachers, inasmuch as the qualifications for the outward government of the church, κυβέρνησις, were different from those which were requisite for the guidance of the church by the preaching of the word, διδασκαλία. The first belonged especially to the presbyters or bishops who stood at the head of the organization for the outward government of the church. Certain it is, at least, that they did not all possess the gift of teaching as διδάσκαλοι, *teachers*. On the other hand, there may have been persons endowed with the gift of teaching, and qualified thus to be teachers, who still belonged not to the class of presbyters. The relations of these offices to one another seem not to have been the same in all stages of the development of the apostolical churches.

can prosper. The great principles which are given by the apostle, in the passage before us, for the guidance of the church,—these, and these only, remain unchangeably the same; because they are immediately connected with the nature of the Christian church, as a spiritual community. All else is mutable. The form of the church remained not the same, even through the whole course of the apostolic age, from the first descent of the Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, to the death of John the apostle. Particular forms of church government may be more or less suited to the nature of the Christian church; and we may add, no one is absolutely perfect, neither are all alike good under all circumstances. Would then that all, in their strivings after forms of church government, would abide fast by those which they believe to be best adapted to promote their own spiritual edification, and which they may have found, by experience, to be best suited to the wants of their own Christian community. Only let them not seek to impose upon all Christians any one form as indispensably necessary. Only let them remember, that the upbuilding of the church of Christ may be carried on under other forms also; and that the same Spirit, on which the existence of the church depends, can as truly operate in other churches as in their own. Would that Congregationalists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians, Calvinists and Lutherans, would abide by that only unchangeable foundation which Christ has laid. Would that on such a foundation, which no man can lay, they would meet as brethren in Christ, acknowledging each other as members of one catholic church, and organs of the same

Spirit, co-operating together for the promotion of the great ends indicated by the apostle Paul in Eph. 4: 13—16.

It must, indeed, be of great importance to examine impartially the relations of the apostolical church; for, at this time, the Spirit of Christ, through the apostles, wrought in its purest influence; by which means the mingling of foreign elements was prevented in the development of this system of ecclesiastical polity. In this respect we must all admit that the apostolical church commends itself to us as a model of church government. But, in the first place, let us remember, agreeably to what has already been said, that not all the forms of church government which were adapted to the exigencies of the church at this early period, can be received as patterns for the church at other times; neither can the imitation be pressed too far. Let us remember, that it is only that same Spirit which is imparted to us through the intervention of the apostles, which, at all times, and under all possible relations, will direct to the most appropriate and most efficient form of government, if, in humility and sincerity, we surrender ourselves up to its teaching and guidance. And secondly, let us remember, that, after true and faithful inquiry on these subjects, men may honestly differ in their views on those minor points, without interrupting the higher communion of faith and love.

In the apostolical church there was one office which bears no resemblance to any other, and to which none can be made to conform. This is the office of the apostles. They stand as the medium of communication between Christ and the whole Christian church, to transmit his word and his Spirit through all ages. In this respect the church must

ever continue to acknowledge her dependence upon them, and to own their rightful authority. Their authority and power can be delegated to none other. But the service which the apostles themselves sought to confer, was to transmit to men the word and the Spirit of the Lord, and, by this means, to establish independent Christian communities. These communities, when once established, they refused to hold in a state of slavish dependence upon themselves. Their object was, in the Spirit of the Lord, to make the churches free, and independent of their guidance. To the churches their language was, "Ye beloved, ye are made free, be ye the servants of no man." The churches were taught to govern themselves. All the members were made to co-operate together as organs of one Spirit, in connection with which spiritual gifts were imparted to each as he might need. Thus they, whose prerogative it was to rule among the brethren, demeaned themselves as the servants of Christ and his church. They acted in the name of Christ and his church, as the organs of that Spirit with which all were inspired, and from which they derived the consciousness of their mutual Christian fellowship.

The brethren chose their own officers from among themselves. Or if, in the first organization of the churches, their officers were appointed by the apostles, it was with the approbation of the members of the same. The general concerns of the church were managed by the apostles in connection with their brethren in the church, to whom they also addressed their epistles.

The earliest constitution of the church was modelled, for the most part, after that religious community with which it

stood in closest connection, and to which it was most assimilated—the Jewish synagogue. This, however, was so modified as to conform to the nature of the Christian community, and to the new and peculiar spirit with which it was animated. Like the synagogue, the church was governed by an associated body of men appointed for this purpose.

The name of *presbyters*, which was appropriated to this body, was derived from the Jewish synagogue. But in the Gentile churches, formed by the apostle Paul, they took the name of *ἐπίσκοποι, bishops*, a term more significant of their office in the language generally spoken by the members of these churches. The name of *presbyters* denoted the dignity of their office. That of *bishops*, on the other hand, was expressive rather of the nature of their office, *ἐπισκοπεῖν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, to take the oversight of the church.* Most certainly no other distinction originally existed between them. But, in process of time, some one, in the ordinary course of events, would gradually obtain the pre-eminence over his colleagues, and by reason of that peculiar oversight which he exercised over the whole community, might come to be designated by the name *ἐπίσκοπος, bishop*, which was originally applied to them all indiscriminately. The constant tumults, from within and from without, which agitated the church in the times of the apostles, may have given to such a one opportunity to exercise his influence the more efficiently; so that, at such a time, the controlling influence of one in this capacity may have been very salutary to the church. This change in the relation of the presbyters to each other was not the same in all the churches, but varied according

to their different circumstances. It may have been as early as the latter part of the life of John, when he was sole survivor of the other apostles, that one, as president of this body of presbyters, was distinguished by the name of *ἐπίσκοπος*, *bishop*. There is, however, no evidence that the apostle himself introduced this change; much less, that he authorized it as a perpetual ordinance for the future. Such an ordinance is in direct opposition to the spirit of that apostle.[3]

This change in the mode of administering the government of the church, resulting from peculiar circumstances, may have been introduced as a salutary expedient, without implying any departure from the purity of the Christian spirit. When, however, the doctrine is, as it gradually gained currency in the third century,—that the bishops are, by divine right, the head of the church, and invested with the government of the same; that they are the successors of the apostles, and by this succession inherit apostolical au-

[3] In the angels of the churches in the seven epistles of the Apocalypse, I cannot recognize the שְׁלִיחֵי צִבּוּר of the Jewish synagogue transferred to the Christian church. The application appears to me to be altogether arbitrary. Nor again can I discover in the angel of the church, the bishop, addressed as the representative of this body of believers. How much must we assume as already proved, which yet is entirely without evidence, in assigning to this early period the rise of such a monarchical system of government, that the bishop alone can be put in the place of the whole church? In this phraseology I recognize rather a symbolical application of the idea of guardian angels, similar to that of the Ferver of the Parsees, as a symbolical representation and image of the whole church. Such a figurative representation corresponds well with the poetical and symbolical character of the book throughout. It is also expressly said that the address is to the whole body of the churches.

thority; that they are the medium through which, in consequence of that ordination which they have received, merely in an outward manner, the Holy Ghost, in all time to come, must be transmitted to the church—when this becomes the doctrine of the church, we certainly must perceive, in these assumptions, a strong corruption of the purity of the Christian system. It is a carnal perversion of the true idea of the Christian church. It is falling back into the spirit of the Jewish religion. Instead of the Christian idea of a church, based on inward principles of communion, and extending itself by means of these, it presents us with the image of one, like that under the Old Testament, resting in outward ordinances, and, by external rites, seeking to promote the propagation of the kingdom of God. This entire perversion of the original view of the Christian church was itself the origin of the whole system of the Roman Catholic religion,—the germ from which sprung the popery of the dark ages.

We hold, indeed, no controversy with that class of Episcopalians who adhere to the Episcopal system above mentioned as well adapted, in their opinion, to the exigencies of their church. We would live in harmony with them, notwithstanding their mistaken views of the true form of the church, provided they denounce not other systems of church government. But the doctrine of the absolute necessity of the Episcopal as the only valid form of government, and of the Episcopal succession of bishops above mentioned, in order to a participation in the gifts of the Spirit, all this we must regard as something foreign to the true idea of the Christian church. It is in direct conflict with the spirit of

protestantism; and is the origin, not of the true catholicism of the apostle, but of that of the Romish church. When, therefore, Episcopalians disown, as essentially deficient in their ecclesiastical organization, other protestant churches which evidently have the spirit of Christ, it only remains for us to protest, in the strongest terms, against their setting up such a standard of perfection for the Christian church. Far be it from us, who began with Luther in the spirit, that we should now desire to be made perfect by the flesh. Gal. 3: 3.

DR. A. NEANDER.

Berlin, April 28th, 1843.

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

SUMMARY VIEW.

THE Christian church derived its earliest form from a small society of believers, who were united together by no law but that of the love which they felt to one another, and to their common Lord.[1] After his ascension, they continued to meet, in singleness of heart, for the mutual interchange of sympathy and love, and for the worship of their Lord and Master. The government which, in process of time, the fraternity adopted for themselves, was free and voluntary. Each individual church possessed the rights and powers inherent in an independent popular assembly; or, to adopt the language of another, "The right to enact their laws, and the entire government of the church, was vested in each individual association of which the church was composed, and was exercised by the members of the same, in connection with their overseers and teachers, and, when the apostles were present, in common also with them."[2] This general exposition of the government of the primitive church, it will be our

[1] Neander's Apost. Kirch. Vol. I. c. 1. Rothe, Anfänge der Christ. Kirch. I. S. 141—2.

[2] Cited in Allgemeine Kirch. Zeitung, 1833. No. 103.

business to illustrate and defend in the following pages. The course of our inquiries will lead us to examine the popular government of the apostolical and primitive church, to trace the gradual extinction of this form of government, and the rise of the Episcopal system; and also to consider the simplicity of primitive worship in its several parts.

The arguments for the popular government of the apostolical and primitive church may be arranged under the following heads.

1. It harmonizes with the primitive simplicity of all forms of government.

The multiplication of offices, the adjustment of the gradations of rank and power, and a complicated system of rites and forms, are the work of time. At first, the rules of government, however administered, are few and simple. The early Christians, especially, associating together in the confidence of mutual love, and uniting in sincerity of heart for the worship of God, may fairly be presumed to have had only a few conventional rules for the regulation of their fraternity.

2. It is, perhaps, the only organization which the church could safely have formed, at that time, under the Roman government.

Without any established religion, the Romans tolerated indeed, different religious sects, and might have extended the same indulgence to the primitive Christians. But they looked with suspicion upon every organization of party or sect, as treason against the state, and punished with cruel jealousy every indication of a confederacy within the empire. The charge of treasonable intentions prevailed with the Roman governor against our Lord. And under Trajan, A. D. 103, a bloody persecution was commenced against the church, on the suspicion that it might be a secret society, formed for seditious purposes. Under these circumstances,

it is difficult to conceive how a diocesan consolidation of the churches established by the apostles, could have been effected without bringing down upon them the vengeance of the Roman government, to crush, at the outset, a coalition to it so obnoxious. Their apparently harmless and informal assemblies, and the total absence of all connection, one with another, was, according to Planck and many others, the means of saving the early churches so long and so extensively from the exterminating sword of Roman jealousy.[3]

Crevit occulto, velut arbor, aevo.

3. Such an organization must have been formed, it would seem, in order to unite the discordant parties in the primitive churches.

Here was the Jew, the Greek, the Roman, and Barbarians of every form of superstition; converts, indeed, to faith in Christ, but with all their partialities and prejudices still. What but a voluntary principle, guaranteeing to all the freedom of a popular assembly, could unite these parties in one fraternity? Our Lord himself employed no artificial bands to bind his followers together into a permanent body; and they were alienated from him upon the slightest offence. The apostles had still less to bind their adherents firmly to themselves. It required all their wisdom and address to reconcile the discordant prejudices of their converts, and unite them in harmonious fellowship one with another. This difficulty met the apostles at the outset of their ministry, in the murmuring of the Greeks against the Jews, that their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. This mutual jealousy was a continual trial besetting them on every side, from the churches which they had formed. Under such circumstances, they assumed not the responsibility of settling these controversies by apostolical or Episcopal authority; but by their counsel and persuasion, they sought to obviate the

[3] Gesellschafts-Verfass, I. S. 40—50.

prejudices of their brethren. Everything relating to the interests of each church they left to be publicly discussed, and decided by mutual consent. In this manner they quieted these complaints of the Greeks respecting the distribution of alms. Acts 6: 1—8. And such, no doubt, became their settled policy in their care of the churches. Even the apostles were not exempt from these infirmities and misunderstandings, and might have found no small difficulty in arranging among themselves a more artificial and complicated system of church government.[4]

4. The same is inferred from the existence of popular rights and privileges in the early periods of the Christian church.

It is known to every one at all acquainted with the early history of the church, that from the second century down to the final triumph of papacy, there was a strong and increasing tendency to exalt and extend the authority of the clergy, and to curtail and depress that of the people. The fact is undeniable. But how shall it be explained? If a prelatical form of organization was divinely appointed by Christ and his apostles, vesting in the clergy alone the right of government, and if the tide of clerical encroachment ran so steadily and strongly from the first, then it is inconceivable, how, under these circumstances, the doctrine of popular rights should ever have obtained such a footing in the church, as to maintain itself for centuries against the influences of a jealous and oppressive hierarchy. Had the doctrine of the popular rights been totally lost in the second and third centuries, this would by no means warrant the inference that such rights were unknown in the days of the

[4] Schroeter und Klein, Für Christenthum Oppositionsschrift, I. S. [illegible]gel, Handbuch, II. 455—6. Arnold, Wahre-Abbildung der [illegible]risten, B. II. c. 5, seq. Schoene, Geschichtsforschungen [illegible] Gebräuch. I. S. 234—5.

apostles. They might have all been swept away by the irresistible tide of clerical influence and authority. But they were not lost. They were recognized even in the fourth and fifth centuries, and long after the hierarchy was established in connection with the state, and its authority enforced by imperial power. Were not the rights of the people established by Christ and the apostles? If not, how could they have come in and maintained their ground against the current that continually ran with such strength in the opposite direction?

5. A popular form of church government harmonizes with the spirit, the instructions, and the example of Christ.

(*a*) *With his spirit.* He was of a meek and lowly spirit, unostentatious and unassuming. He shrank from the demonstrations of power, and refused the titles and honors that, at times, were pressed upon his acceptance. With such a spirit, that religious system must be congenial, which, without any parade of titles and of rank, has few offices, and little to excite the pride or tempt the ambition of man.

(*b*) *With his instructions.* Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them, but it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. Matt. 20: 25—28. Comp. Mark 10: 42—45.

(*c*) *With his example.* This was in perfect coincidence with his instructions, and a striking illustration of his spirit. His life was a pattern of humility, of untiring, unostentatious benevolence. He condescended to the condition of all; and, as one of the latest and most expressive acts of his life, washed his disciples' feet, giving them an example for their

imitation, as the servants of all men. Has such a spirit its just expression in a hierarchy, which has often dishonored the religion of Christ by the display of princely pomp, and the assumption of regal and imperial power? [5]

6. It equally accords with the spirit, the instructions, and the example of the apostles.

(*a*) *With their spirit.* They had renounced their hopes of aggrandizement in the kingdom of Christ, and had imbibed much of his spirit. The world took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus, and had learned of him, who was meek and lowly of heart. They accounted themselves the least of all saints, and the servants of all. This spirit, it would seem, must be foreign from the distinctions of rank and of office, as well as from the authority and power which are inherent in every form of the Episcopal system.

(*b*) *With their instructions.* These were in coincidence with those of their Master. The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men; apt to teach; patient (under injuries); in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves. 2 Tim. 2: 24—25. Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? 1 Cor. 3: 5. They disowned personal authority over the church; and instructed the elders not to lord it over God's heritage, but to be examples to the flock. 1 Pet. 5: 3. If, in the discharge of his ministry, one has occasion to reprove sin in an elder, this he is charged, before God and the elect angels, to do with all circumspection, without prejudice or partiality. 1 Tim. 5: 21.

(*c*) *With their example.* This is the best comment upon their instructions, and the clearest indication of that organ-

[5] The French infidels have an expression relating to our Saviour, which, though impious and profane, clearly indicates the nature of his instructions and example,—"*Jesus Christ, the great Democrat.*"

ization which the church received at their hands. They exercised, indeed, a controlling influence over the several churches which they established, as an American missionary does in organizing his Christian converts into a church, while he constitutes them a popular assembly under a Congregational or Presbyterian form. In like manner, it is observable, that the apostles studiously declined the exercise of prelatical or Episcopal authority.[6] But the control which they at first exercised in the management of the affairs of the church was no part of their office. It was only a temporary expedient, resulting from the necessity of the case. Accordingly, they carefully disclaimed the official exercise of all clerical authority; and, as soon as the circumstances of the churches would admit, they submitted to each the administration of its own government. In this manner, they gave to the churches the character of voluntary, deliberative assemblies, invested with the rights and privileges of religious liberty. In support of this position we have to offer the following considerations:

(α) They addressed the members of the church as *brethren* and *sisters*, and fellow-laborers. I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes, I purposed to come unto you. Rom. 1: 13. And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not in excellency of speech. 1 Cor. 2: 1. I commend unto you Phebe, our sister. Rom. 16: 1. The same familiar, affectionate style of address runs through all the epistles, showing in what consideration the apostles held all the members of the church. "The apostles severally were very far from placing themselves in a relation that bore any analogy to a mediating priesthood. In this respect they always

[6] Planck, Gesellschafts-Verfass., 1. S. 39. Spittler, Can. Recht, c. 1. § 3. Pertsch, Can. Recht, c. 1. § 5—8. Siegel, Kirchliche Verfassungsformen, in Handbuch, II. S. 455. Pertsch, Kirch. Hist. I. S. 156—170, 362—370.

placed themselves on a footing of equality. If Paul assured them of his intercessory prayers for them, he in return requested their prayers for himself." [7]

(β) The apostles remonstrate with the members of the church as with *brethren*, instead of rebuking them authoritatively. Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you. 1 Cor. 1: 10. Furthermore, then, we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you. 1 Thess. 4: 1. My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. James 2: 1. They spoke not by *commandment*, but in the language of mutual counsellors. 1 Cor. 11: 13—16.[8]

(γ) They treated with the church as an independent body, competent to judge and act for itself. They appealed to the judgment of their brethren personally. 1 Cor. 11: 13—16. 1 Thess. 5: 21. They reported their own doings to the church, as if amenable to that body, Acts 11: 1—18. 14: 26, 27, and exhorted the brethren to hold their teachers under their watch and discipline. Rom. 16: 17.

(δ) They exhorted the churches to deeds of charity and benevolence; but submitted to each the disposal of his goods and his charities. Acts 5: 4. 11: 29, 30, etc. 1 Cor. 16: 1, seq. 2 Cor. 9: 1 seq.

(ε) They addressed their epistles, not to the pastors of the churches, but to the churches, or to the churches and pastors collectively, giving precedence, in some instances, to the church. Phil. 1: 1. Even the epistles which treat of controverted ecclesiastical matters, are addressed, not to the bishops and presbyters, but to the *whole body of believers*, indicating that the decision belonged to them. Had it been oth-

[7] Neander, Apostol. Kirch., I. p. 161, 3d edit.; and in the sequel much more to the same effect.

[8] Comp. Socrates, Hist. Eccl. Lib. 5. c. 22.

erwise, would not such instructions and advice have been given to the ministers of the churches?[9]

(ζ) They recognize the right of the churches to send out their own religious teachers and messengers, as they might have occasion. Acts 11: 19—24; 15: 32, 33. 2 Cor. 8: 23. Phil. 2: 25. 1 Cor. 16: 3, 4. These deputations, and the power of sending them, indicate the independent authority of the churches.

(η) They united with the church in mutual consultation upon doubtful questions. The brethren took part in the dissension with Peter, for having preached unto the Gentiles. Acts 11: 1—18. The apostles united with them in the discussion of the question respecting circumcision, which was submitted to them by the delegation from Antioch, and the result was published in the name of the apostles and the *brethren*, jointly. Acts 15: 1 seq.

(ϑ) They submitted to the church the settlement of their own difficulties. The appointment of the seven deacons, to obviate the murmurs of the Greeks, was made at the suggestion of the apostles, but the election was wholly the act of the church. Acts 6: 1—6. The apostles refused any authoritative arbitration in the case; and required the churches to choose arbitrators among themselves to settle their own litigations. 1 Cor. 6: 1.

(ι) They entrusted the church, also, with the important right of electing its own officers. As in the case of the seven deacons, which we have just stated; the apostles refused even the responsibility of supplying, in their own number, the place of the traitor Judas, but submitted the choice to the assembly of the disciples. Acts 1: 15, seq. In this connection should the appointment of elders, Acts 14: 23, also be mentioned, as may hereafter appear.

(κ) The apostles submitted to the church the discipline of

[9] Comp. Ep. Clem. and Euseb., h. e. Lib. 4. c. 15. Lib. 5. c. 1, c. 24.

its members; as in the case of the incestuous person, who was excommunicated and afterwards restored to the church by that body. "The relations of presbyters to the church was not that of rulers with monarchical powers, but of the officers of an ecclesiastical republic. In all things they were to act in connection with the church, and to perform their duties as the servants, and not the lords of the church. The apostles recognized the same relation. They addressed their epistles, not to the officers of the church, but to the whole body, when treating not merely of doctrinal points, but of moral duties and of church discipline. The apostle Paul, when speaking of the excommunication of the incestuous person at Corinth, regards himself as united in spirit with the whole church, 1 Cor. 5: 4; thus indicating the principle, that their co-operation was required in all such cases of general interest."[10]

The churches, therefore, which were planted by the apostles, were under their sanction organized as independent popular assemblies, with power to elect officers, adopt rules, administer discipline, and to do all those acts which belong to such deliberative bodies.

7. The popular government of the primitive church is apparent from its analogy to the Jewish synagogue.

This and each of the following articles, under this head, will be the subjects of consideration in another place. They are assumed as so many separate heads of argumentation, so far as they may appear to be founded in truth. Comp. Chap. II.

8. The primitive churches were, severally, independent bodies, in Christian fellowship, but having no confederate relations one toward another.

"The power of enacting laws," says Mosheim, "of ap-

[10] Neander, Allgem. Gesch., I, S. 324, 2d ed.

pointing teachers and ministers, and of determining controversies, was lodged in the people at large; nor did the apostles, though invested with divine authority, either resolve or sanction anything whatever, without the knowledge and concurrence of the general body of Christians, of which the church was composed."[11] Comp. Chap. III.

9. These churches severally enjoyed the inherent right of every independent body—that of choosing their own officers. This right, which, as we have seen, belonged to the apostolical churches, was retained in the churches during the ages immediately following. Comp. Chap. IV.

10. As in the apostolical, so in the other primitive churches, the right of discipline was vested, not in the clergy, but in each church collectively.[12]

Even the officers of the church were subject to the authority of the same. Clement recognizes this authority in his epistles to the Corinthians.[13] Comp. Chap. V.

11. The appropriate officers of the church were deacons and pastors. These pastors were denominated indiscriminately bishops, *overseers*, and elders, *presbyters*, and were at first identical. Comp. Chap. VI.

[11] De Rebus Christ., etc. § 1, 37. To the same effect, also, is the authority of Neander, Apost. Kirch. pp. 1, 161, 201, 214, 3d ed.

[12] Primo omnibus ecclesiae membris jus eligendi pastores et diaconos erat. Communicatio erat quaedam inter varios coetus christianos vel ecclesias; literae quas altera acceperat alteri legendae mittebantur. Pecunias ad pauperes sublevandos ecclesia ecclesiae donabat. De rebus fidei et disciplinae jam apostoli deliberaverunt. Quaequae ecclesia exercebat jus excommunicandi eos qui doctrinae et vitae christianae renunciaverant, eosque recipiendi quorum poenitentia et mentis mutatio constabat. Sic prima christianorum ecclesia libertate, concordia, sanctitate floruit. Sack Comment, ad Theol. Inst. p. 141.

[13] Epist. § 54, comp. 44. Also Pertsch, Kirch. Hist. I. 362.

The government of the church was the peculiar office of the bishops or presbyters. It was their business to watch over the general order,—to maintain the purity of the Christian doctrine and of Christian practice,—to guard against abuses,—to admonish the faulty,—and to guide the public deliberations; as appears from the passages in the New Testament where their functions are described. But their government by no means excluded the participation of the whole church in the management of their common concerns, as may be inferred from what we have already remarked respecting the nature of Christian communion, and as is also evident from many individual examples in the apostolical churches. The whole church at Jerusalem took part in the deliberations respecting the relation of the Jewish and Gentile Christians to each other, and the epistle drawn up after these deliberations was likewise in the name of the whole church. The epistles of the apostle Paul, as has already been remarked, which treat of various controverted ecclesiastical matters, are addressed to the whole churches; implying that the decision belonged to the whole body. Had it been otherwise, would he not have addressed his instructions and advice, principally at least, to the overseers of the church? When a licentious person belonging to the church at Corinth is to be excommunicated, the apostle treats it as a measure that ought to proceed from the whole society; and places himself, therefore, in spirit among them, to unite with them in passing judgment; 1 Cor. 5: 3—5. Also when discoursing of the settlement of litigations, the apostle does not affirm that it properly belonged to the overseers of the church; although, if this had been the prevalent custom, he would no doubt have referred to it; what he says, seems rather to imply that it was usual, in particular instances, to select arbitrators from among the members of the church, 1 Cor. 6: 5.[14]

Greiling, after going through with an examination of the

[14] Neander, Apost. Kirch. I. pp. 1, 201. Comp. also, p. 214.

government of the apostolical churches, gives the following summary: "In the age of the apostles, there was no primate of the churches, but the entire equality of brethren prevailed. The apostles themselves exercised no kind of authority or power over the churches; but styled themselves their helpers and servants. The settlement of controverted points, the adoption of new rites, the discipline of the church, the election of presbyters, and even the choice of an apostle, were submitted to the church. The principle on which the apostles proceeded was, that the *church*, that is, the elders and the members of the church unitedly, were the depositaries of all their social rights; that *no others* could exercise this right but those to whom the church might entrust it, and who were accordingly amenable to the church. Even the apostles, though next to Christ himself, invested with the highest authority, assumed no superiority over the presbyters, but treated them as brethren, and styled themselves fellow-presbyters,—thus recognizing them as associates in office."[15]

Finally, the worship of the primitive churches was remarkable for its freedom and simplicity. Their religious rites were few and simple; and restrained by no complicated ritual, or prescribed ceremonials. This point is considered, at length, in a subsequent part of the work.

The government throughout was wholly popular. Every church adopted its own regulations, and enacted its own laws. These laws were administered by officers elected by the church. No church was dependent upon another. They were represented in synod by their own delegates. Their discipline was administered, not by the clergy, but by the people or the church collectively. And even after ordination became the exclusive right of the bishop, no one was permitted to preach to any congregation, who was not sufficiently approved, and duly accepted by the congregation; and all

[15] Apostol. Christengemeine. Halberstadt, 1819.

their religious worship was conducted on the same principles of freedom and equality.

Such was the organization of the Christian church in its primitive simplicity and purity. The national peculiarities of the Jewish and gentile converts, in some degree, modified individual churches, but the form of government was substantially the same in all. We claim not for it authority absolutely imperative and divine, to the exclusion of every other system; but it has, we must believe, enough of precept, of precedent, and of principle, to give it a sanction truly apostolic. Its advantages and practical results justly claim an attentive consideration.

CHAPTER II.

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCHES FORMED AFTER THE MODEL OF THE JEWISH SYNAGOGUE.

The apostles and the first disciples were Jews, who, after their conversion, retained the prejudices and partialities of their nation. They observed still all the rites of their religion; and, firmly believing that salvation by Christ belonged only to the circumcision, they refused the ministry of reconciliation to the Gentiles. All their national peculiarities led them to conform the Christian to the Jewish church.

With the temple-service and the Mosaic ritual, however, Christianity had no affinity. The sacrificial offerings of the temple, and the Levitical priesthood, it abolished. But in the synagogue-worship, the followers of Christ found a more congenial institution. It invited them to the reading of the Scriptures, and to prayer. It gave them liberty of speech in exhortation, and in worshipping and praising God. The rules and government of the synagogue, while they offered little, comparatively, to excite the pride of office and of power, commended themselves the more to the humble believer in Christ. The synagogue was endeared to the devout Jew by sacred associations and tender recollections. It was near at hand, and not, like the temple, afar off. He went but seldom up to Jerusalem; and only on great occasions joined in the rites of the temple-service. But in the synagogue he paid his constant devotions to the God of his fathers. It met his eye in every place. It was constantly

before him, and from infancy to hoary age, he was accustomed to repair to that hallowed place of worship, to listen to the reading of his sacred books, to pray and sing praises unto the God of Israel. In accordance with pious usage, therefore, the apostles continued to frequent the synagogues of the Jews. Wherever they went, they resorted to these places of worship, and strove to convert their brethren to faith in Christ, not as a new religion, but as a modification of their own.

In their own religious assemblies they also conformed, as far as was consistent with the spirit of the Christian religion, to the same rites, and gradually settled upon a church-organization which harmonized, in a remarkable manner, with that of the Jewish synagogue. They even retained the same *name*, as the appellation of their Christian assemblies. "If there come into your assembly, *συναγωγήν*, if there come into your *synagogue* a man with a gold ring, etc." James 2: 2. Compare also *ἐπισυναγωγήν*. Heb. 10: 25. Their modes of worship were, substantially, the same as those of the synagogue. The *titles of their officers* they also borrowed from the same source. The titles, Bishop, Pastor, Presbyter, etc., were all familiar to them, as synonymous terms, denoting the same class of officers in the synagogue. Their duties and prerogatives remained, in substance, the same in the Christian church as in that of the Jews.

So great was this similarity between the primitive Christian churches and the Jewish synagogues, that by the Pagan nations they were mistaken for the same institutions. Pagan historians uniformly treated the primitive Christians as Jews.[1] As such, they suffered under the persecutions of their idolatrous rulers. These, and many other particulars that might be mentioned, are sufficient to show, that the ecclesiastical polity of the Jewish synagogue was very closely

[1] Vitringa, De Synagog. Vet. Prolegom. pp. 3, 4.

copied by the apostles and primitive Christians in the organization of their assemblies.

In support of the foregoing statements, authorities to any extent, and of the highest character, might easily be adduced. Let the following, however, suffice, from Neander, who is generally acknowledged to be more profoundly skilled in the history of the Christian church than any other man now living. "The disciples had not yet attained a clear understanding of that call, which Christ had already given them by so many intimations, to form a church entirely separated from the existing Jewish economy; to that economy they adhered as much as possible; all the forms of the national theocracy were sacred in their esteem; it seemed the natural element of their religious consciousness, though a higher principle of life had been imparted, by which that consciousness was to be progressively inspired and transformed. They remained outwardly Jews, although, in proportion as their faith in Jesus as the Redeemer became clearer and stronger, they would inwardly cease to be Jews, and all external rites would assume a different relation to their internal life. It was their belief, that the existing religious forms would continue till the second coming of Christ, when a new and higher order of things would be established, and this great change they expected would shortly take place. Hence the establishment of a distinct mode of worship was far from entering their thoughts. Although new ideas respecting the essence of true worship arose in their minds from the light of faith in the Redeemer, they felt as great an interest in the temple worship as any devout Jews. They believed, however, that a sifting would take place among the members of the theocracy, and that the better part would, by the acknowledgment of Jesus as the Messiah, be incorporated with the Christian community. As the believers, in opposition to the mass of the Jewish nation who remained hardened in their unbelief, now formed a community inter-

nally bound together by the one faith in Jesus as the Messiah, and by the consciousness of the higher life received from him, it was necessary that this internal union should assume a certain external form. And a model for such a smaller community within the great national theocracy already existed among the Jews, along with the temple worship, namely, *the synagogues*. The means of religious edification which they supplied, took account of the religious welfare of all, and consisted of united prayers and the addresses of individuals who applied themselves to the study of the Old Testament. These means of edification closely corresponded to the nature of the new Christian worship. This form of social worship, as it was copied in all the religious communities founded on Judaism (such as the Essenes), was also adopted, to a certain extent, at the first formation of the Christian church. But it may be disputed, whether the apostles, to whom Christ committed the chief direction of affairs, designed from the first that believers should form a society exactly on the model of the synagogue, and, in pursuance of this plan, instituted particular offices for the government of the church corresponding to that model—or whether, without such a preconceived plan, distinct offices were appointed, as circumstances required, in doing which they would avail themselves of the model of the synagogue with which they were familiar."[2] The latter supposition is forcibly advocated by Neander,[3] who proceeds to say, "Hence, we are disposed to believe, that the church was at first composed entirely of members standing on an equality with one another, and that the apostles alone held a higher rank, and exercised a directing influence over the whole, which arose from the original position in which Christ had placed them in relation to other believers; so that the whole arrangement and administration of the affairs of

[2] Apost. Kirch. 3d edit. p. 31. Comp. 179, 198.
[3] Comp., also, Rothe, Anfänge, p. 163. Note.

the church proceeded from them, and they were first induced by particular circumstances to appoint other church officers, as in the instance of deacons."[4] To the same effect is also Neander's account of this subject in his Church History, where he shows that this organization of Christian churches was the most natural under existing circumstances, and the most acceptable, not only to Jewish converts, but to those who were gathered from the subjects of the Roman government.[5] If the reader require other authority on this subject, he has only to examine Vitringa, De Synagoga Vetere, especially his third book, to say nothing of Selden, Lightfoot, and many others. Vitringa himself has fully sustained the bold title which he gives to his immortal work, —"Three books on the ancient Synagogue; in which it is *demonstrated*, that the form of government and of the ministry in the synagogue was transferred to the Christian church."

It is gratifying to observe, that these views of the great Lutheran historian are fully avowed by Archbishop Whately with his usual independence and candor. "It is probable that one cause, humanly speaking, why we find in the Sacred Books less information concerning the Christian ministry and the constitution of church-governments than we otherwise might have found, is that these institutions had less of *novelty* than some would at first sight suppose, and that many portions of them did not wholly originate with the apostles. It appears highly probable,—I might say, morally certain,—that, wherever a Jewish synagogue existed, that was brought,—the whole, or the chief part of it,—to embrace the gospel, the apostles did not, there, so much *form* a Christian church (or congregation,* *ecclesia*), as *make an*

[4] P. 33. Comp. 195, seq. So, also, Rothe, Anfänge, S. 146—148.

[5] Kirchen. Gesch. I. S. 183—185.

* The word "*congregation*," as it stands in our version of the Old Testament, (and it is one of very frequent occurrence in the Books of

existing congregation Christian; by introducing the Christian sacraments and worship, and establishing whatever regulations were requisite for the newly-adopted faith; leaving the machinery (if I may so speak) of government, unchanged; the "rulers of synagogues, elders, and other officers, (whether spiritual or ecclesiastical, or both,) being already provided in the existing institutions. And it is likely that several of the earliest Christian churches did originate in this way; that is, that they were *converted synagogues;* which *became* Christian churches as soon as the members, or the main part of the members, acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah.

"The attempt to effect this conversion of a Jewish synagogue into a Christian church, seems always to have been made, in the first instance, in every place where there was an opening for *it*. Even after the call of the idolatrous Gentiles, it appears plainly to have been the practice of the apostles Paul and Barnabas,* when they came to any city in

Moses,) is found to correspond, in the Septuagint, which was familiar to the New-Testament writers, to *ecclesia;* the word which, in our version of these last, is always rendered—not "congregation," but "*church.*" This, or its equivalent, "kirk," is probably no other than "circle;" *i. e.*, assembly, *ecclesia.*

* These seem to be the first who are employed in converting the *idolatrous* Gentiles to Christianity,* and their first considerable harvest among these seems to have been at Antioch in Pisidia, as may be seen by any one who attentively reads the 13th chapter of Acts. Peter was sent to Cornelius, a "*devout*" Gentile;—one of those who had renounced idolatry, and frequented the synagogues. And these seem to have been regarded by him as, in an especial manner, his particular charge. His epistles appear to have been addressed to them, as may be seen both by the general tenor of his expression,† and especially in the opening address, which is not, (as would appear from our version,) to the dispersed *Jews*, but to the "sojourners of the dispersion," παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς, i. e. the *devout Gentiles living among* the "dispersion."

* See Barrington's Miscellanea Sacra.

† See Hinds's History, Vol. II.

which there was a synagogue, to go thither first and deliver their sacred message to the Jews and 'devout (or proselyte) Gentiles;'—according to their own expression (Acts 13: 17), to the 'men of Israel and those *that feared* God:' adding, that 'it was necessary that the word of God should first be preached to them.' And when they founded a church in any of those cities in which (and such were, probably, a very large majority) there was no Jewish synagogue that received the gospel, it is likely they would still conform, in a great measure, to the same model."[6]

It is, then, an admitted fact, as clearly settled as anything can be by human authority, that the primitive Christians, in the organization of their assemblies, formed them after the model of the Jewish synagogue. They discarded the splendid ceremonials of the temple-service, and retained the simple rites of the synagogue-worship. They disowned the hereditary aristocracy of the Levitical priesthood,[7] and adopted the popular government of the synagogue.[8]

We are here presented with an important fact in the organization of the primitive churches, strongly illustrative of the popular character of their constitution and government. The synagogue was, essentially, a popular assembly, invested with the rights and possessing the powers which are essential to the enjoyment of religious liberty. Their government was voluntary, elective, free; and administered by rulers or elders elected by the people. The ruler of the synagogue was the moderator of the college of elders, but only *primus inter pares*, holding no official rank above them.[9] The people, as

[6] Kingdom of Christ, pp. 78—80.

[7] The prelatical reference of the Christian ministry to the Levitical priesthood is a device of a later age, though it has been common from the time of Cyprian down to the present time.

[8] Totum regimen ecclesiasticum conformatum fuit ad synogogarum exemplar. Hugo Grotius, Comment. ad Act. 11: 30.

[9] Vitringa, De Vet. Syn. L. 3. c. 16.

Vitringa has shown,[10] appointed their own officers to rule over them. They exercised the natural right of freemen to enact and execute their own laws,—to admit proselytes,—and to exclude, at pleasure, unworthy members from their communion. Theirs was "*a democratical form of government*," and is so described by one of the most able expounders of the constitution of the primitive churches.[11] Like their prototype, therefore, the primitive churches also embodied the principle of a popular government and of enlightened religious liberty.

[10] Comp. Vitringa, De Synagoga, Lib. 3. P. 1. c. 15. pp. 828—863. Nihil actum absque ecclesia, [*i. e.* the synagogue] quae in publico consulta est, et quidem hac ipsa formula: יְהִגּוּן עֲלֵיהֶם sive ἄξιος quam in vertere ecclesia in eligendis episcopis adhibitam meminimus, p. 829. In vita Josephi, . . . publica omnia ibi tractari videmus in synagogis, *consulto populo*, p. 832.

[11] Rothe, Anfänge der Christ. Kirch. S. 14.

CHAPTER III.

INDEPENDENCE OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCHES.

The churches which were established by the apostles and their disciples exhibit a remarkable example of unanimity. One in faith and the fellowship of love, they were united in spirit as different members of one body, or as brethren of the same family.[1] This union and fellowship of spirit the apostles carefully promoted among all the churches. But they instituted no external form of union or confederation between those of different towns or provinces; nor, within the first century of the Christian era can any trace of such a confederacy, whether diocesan or conventional, be detected on the page of history. The diocesan, metropolitan and patriarchal forms of organization belong to a later age. The idea of a holy catholic church, one and indivisible, had not yet arisen in the church, nor had it assumed any outward form of union. Wherever converts to Christianity were multiplied they formed themselves into a church, under the guidance of their religious teachers, for the enjoyment of Christian ordinances. But each individual church constituted an independent and separate community. The society was purely voluntary, and every church so constituted was strictly independent of all others in the conduct of its worship, the admission of its members, the exercise of its discipline, the choice of its officers and the entire management of its affairs. They were, in a word, independent

[1] 1 Cor. 12: 12, 13. Eph. 2: 20. 4: 3.

republics, as Mosheim and Neander justly describe them. "Each individual church which had a bishop or presbyter of its own, assumed to itself the form and rights of a little distinct republic or commonwealth; and with regard to its internal concerns was wholly regulated by a code of laws, that if they did not originate with, had at least received the sanction of the people constituting such church." This is said with special reference to the earliest churches.[2] "In regard to the relations of the presbyters to the churches, they were appointed, not to exercise unlimited authority, but to act as the leaders and rulers of ecclesiastical republics, to transact every thing in connection with the church, not as lords of the same, but as its servants."[3] The opinion of these great historians of the church, in respect to the independent, popular character of the government of the primitive churches, is sufficiently obvious in these passages.

Particular neighboring churches may for various reasons have sustained peculiar fraternal relations to each other. Local and other circumstances may, in time, have given rise to correspondence between churches more remote, or to mutual consultations by letter and by delegates, as in the instance of the churches at Antioch and Jerusalem, Acts xv, and of Corinth and Rome;[4] but no established jurisdiction was exercised by one over the other, nor did any settled relations subsist between them. The church at Jerusalem, with the apostles and elders, addressed the church at Antioch, not in the language of authority, but of *advice*. Nor does ancient history, sacred or profane, relating to this early period, record a single instance in which one church presumed to impose laws of its own upon another.

This independence of the churches, one of another, is fully and clearly presented by Mosheim. "Although all the churches were, in this first stage of Christianity, united to-

[2] Mosheim, De Rebus Christ., Saec. 11. § 22.

[3] Neander, Allgemein. Gesch., I. 291, 2.

[4] See Epistle of Clement of Rome, to the Corinthians.

gether in one common bond of faith and love, and were, in every respect, ready to promote the interest and welfare of each other by a reciprocal interchange of good offices, yet, with regard to government and internal economy, every individual church considered itself as an independent community, none of them ever looking beyond the circle of its own members for assistance, or recognizing any sort of external influence or authority. Neither in the New Testament, nor in any ancient document whatever, do we find anything recorded, from which it might be inferred that any of the minor churches were at all dependent on, or looked up for direction to, those of greater magnitude or consequence. On the contrary, several things occur therein which put it out of all doubt, that every one of them enjoyed the same rights, and was considered as being on a footing of the most perfect equality with the rest. Indeed it cannot, I will not say be proved, but even be made to appear probable, from testimony human or divine, that in this age it was the practice for several churches to enter into and maintain among themselves, that sort of association which afterwards came to subsist among the churches of almost every province. I allude to their assembling by their bishops, at stated periods, for the purpose of enacting general laws, and determining any questions or controversies that might arise respecting divine matters. It is not until the second century, that any traces of that sort of association from whence councils took their origin are to be perceived; when we find them occurring here and there, some of them tolerably clear and distinct, others again but slight and faint, which seems plainly to prove that the practice arose subsequently to the times of the apostles, and that all that is urged concerning the councils of the first century, and the divine authority of councils, is sustained merely by the most uncertain kind of evidence, namely, the practice and opinion of more recent times."[5]

[5] De Rebus Christ., Saec. I. § 48.

Indications of this original independence are distinctly manifest even after the rise of Episcopacy. Every bishop had the right to form his own liturgy and creed, and to settle at pleasure his own time and mode of celebrating the religious festivals.[6] Cyprian strongly asserts the right of every bishop to make laws for his own church. Socrates assigns this original independence of the bishops as the principal cause of the endless controversies in the church, respecting the observance of Easter and other festivals.[7]

But we need not enlarge. Nothing in the history of the primitive churches is more incontrovertible, than the fact of their absolute independence one of another. It is attested by the highest historical authorities, and appears to be generally conceded by Episcopal authors themselves. "At first," says the learned Dr. Barrow, "every church was settled apart under its own bishop and presbyters, so as independently and separately to manage its own concerns. Each was governed by its own head and had its own laws."[8]

"Every church," according to Dr. Burton, "had its own spiritual head or bishop, and was independent of every other church, with respect to its own internal regulations and laws. There was, however, a connexion, more or less intimate, between neighboring churches, which was a consequence, in some degree, of the geographical or civil divisions of the empire. Thus the churches of one province, such as Achaia, Egypt, Cappadocia, etc., formed a kind of union, and the bishop of the capital, particularly if his see happened to be of apostolic foundation, acquired a precedence in rank and dignity over the rest. This superiority was often increased by the bishop of the capital (who was called, in later times, the metropolitan) having actually planted the church in small-

[6] Greiling, Apostol. Christengemeine. S. 16.

[7] Eccles. Hist. Lib. 5. c. 22.

[8] Treatise on Pope's Supremacy, Works, Vol. I. p. 662. Comp. King's Prim. Christ. c. 12. p. 14, also 136.

er and more distant places; so that the mother-church, as it might literally be termed, continued to feel a natural and parental regard for the churches planted by itself. These churches, however, were wholly independent in matters of internal jurisdiction; though it was likely that there would be a resemblance, in points even of slight importance, between churches of the same province."

Riddle's account of this subject is as follows:—"The apostles or their representatives exercised a general superintendence over the churches by divine authority, attested by miraculous gifts. The subordinate government of each particular church was vested in itself; that is to say, the whole body elected its ministers and officers, and was consulted concerning all matters of importance. All churches were independent of each other, but were united by the bonds of holy charity, sympathy and friendship."[9]

Similar views are also expressed by Archbishop Whately. "Though there was one Lord, one faith, one baptism, for all of these, yet they were each a distinct, independent community on earth, united by the common principles on which they were founded by their mutual agreement, affection and respect; but not having any one recognized head on earth, or acknowledging any sovereignty of one of those societies over others. Each bishop originally presided over one entire church."[10] Now what, according to these Episcopal concessions, was the bishop at first, but the pastor of a single church, a *parochial bishop*, exercising only the jurisdiction, and enjoying the rights of an independent Congregational clergyman? But more of this hereafter.

Several of the ancient churches firmly asserted and maintained their original religious liberty, by refusing to acknowledge the authority of the ancient councils, for a long time after the greater part of the churches had subjected them-

[9] Chronology, Beginning of Second Century.
[10] Kingdom of Christ. N. Y. 1842; p. 110, 136.

selves to the authority of these confederacies. The church in Africa, for example, and some of the Eastern churches, although they adopted the custom of holding councils, and were in correspondence with these churches, declined entering into any grand Christian confederation with them; and continued for some time inflexibly tenacious of their own just liberty and independence. This their example is an effectual refutation of those who pretend that these councils were divinely appointed and had, *jure divino*, authority over the churches. Who can suppose that these churches would have asserted their independence so sternly, against an institution appointed by our Lord or his apostles?[11]

The early independence of the churches, then, is conceded even by Episcopalians themselves. It has both the sanction of apostolic precedent, and the concurring authority of ecclesiastical writers, ancient and modern. This of itself is a point strongly illustrative of the religious freedom which was the basis of their original polity. This independence of particular churches is the great central principle, the original element, of their popular constitution and government. It vests the authority and power of each church in its own members collectively. It guards their rights. It guarantees to them the elective franchise, and ensures to them the enjoyment of religious liberty, under a government administered by the voice of the majority, or delegated at pleasure to their representatives. The constitution of the churches and their mutual relations, may not have been precisely Congregational or Presbyterian, but they involved the principles of the religious freedom and the popular rights which both are designed to protect.

[11] Even the council of Nice, in treating of the authority of the metropolitan bishops of Rome, Antioch and Alexandria, rests the dignity and authority of these prelates, not on any *divine right*, but solely on ancient usage. *Τὰ ἀρχαῖα ἔθη κρατείτω*, etc., *ἐπειδὴ καὶ τῷ ἐν τῇ Ρώμῃ ἐπισκόπῳ σύνηθες ἐστιν*, Can. 6. Comp. Du Pin, Antiq. Eccl. Disciplina. Diss. 1. § 7. Mosheim, De Rebus Christ., Saec. II. § 23, Note.

CHAPTER IV.

ELECTIONS BY THE CHURCH.

The right of suffrage was, from the beginning, enjoyed in the Christian church. The first public act of this body was a formal recognition and a legitimate exercise of this right. First in importance among their popular rights, they maintained it with greater constancy than any other against the usurpations of prelatical power, and resigned it last of all into the hands of their spiritual oppressors. The subject of the following chapter leads us to consider,

I. The evidence that the right of suffrage was enjoyed by the primitive church.

II. The time and means of the extinction of this right.

I. The members of the primitive church enjoyed the right of electing, by a popular vote, their own officers and teachers. The evidence in support of this position is derived from the writings of the apostles and of the early fathers. In the former we have on record instances of the election of an apostle, and of deacons, delegates and presbyters of the church, each by a popular vote of that body. From the latter, we learn that the church continued for several centuries subsequent to the age of the apostles, in the enjoyment of the elective franchise.

1. The scriptural argument, from the writings of the apostles.

(*a*) The election of an apostle.

The first public act of the church after our Lord's ascension, was the choice of a substitute in the place of the apostle Judas. This election was made, not by the apostles themselves, but by the joint action of the whole body of believers. If, in any instance, the apostles had the right, by their own independent authority, to invest another with the ministerial office, we might expect them to exercise that prerogative in supplying this vacancy in their own body. That right, however, they virtually disclaimed, by submitting the election to the arbitration of the assembled body of believers. If they exercised any leading influence in the election, it was in nominating the two candidates for office, Joseph and Matthias, Acts 1: 23. Nothing, however, appears from the context to decide whether even the nomination proceeded from them, or from the church collectively. But however that may be, the *election* was the act of the assembly; and was made, either by casting lots, or by an elective vote. Mosheim understands the phrase, *ἔδωκεν κλήρους αὐτῶν*, to express the casting of a *popular vote* by the Christians. To express the casting of lots, according to this author, the verb should have been *ἔβαλον*, as in Matth. 27: 35. Luke 23: 34. John 19: 24. Mark 15: 24. Comp. Septuagint, Ps. 22: 19. Joel 3: 3. Nah. 3: 10; which also accords with the usage of Homer in similar cases.[1] But the phrase, *ἔδωκεν κλήρους*, according to this author, expresses the casting of a popular vote; the term, *κλήρους*, being used in the sense of *ψῆφος, a suffrage, or vote*, so that what the evangelist meant to say was simply this: "and those who were present gave their votes."[2]

The precise mode of determining the election, perhaps, cannot be fully settled. Nor are the persons who gave

[1] Iliad, 23. 352. Odyss. 14. 209.

[2] De Rebus Christ., Saec. 1. § 14. Note.

the vote clearly designated, but they appear to have been the whole body of believers then present. When we compare this election with that of the deacons, which soon followed, and consider the uniform custom of the disciples to submit to the church the enacting of their own laws, and the exercise of their popular rights, in other respects, we must regard the election before us, as the joint act of the brethren there assembled. For this opinion, we have high authority from German writers. "The whole company of believers had a part in supplying the number of the apostles themselves, and the choice was their joint act."[3] "At the request of the apostles, the church chose, by lot, Matthias for an apostle, in the place of Judas."[4] "Without doubt, those expositors adopt the right view, who suppose that not only the apostles, but all the believers were at that time assembled; for, though in Acts 1: 26, the apostles are primarily intended, yet the *disciples collectively* form the chief subject, Acts 1: 15, to which *all* at the beginning of the second chapter necessarily refers."[5] This is said with reference to the assembly on the day of Pentecost, but the reasoning shows distinctly the views of the author respecting the persons who composed the assembly at the election of Matthias. "In all decisions and acts, even in the election of the twelfth apostle, the church had a voice."[6]

Chrysostom's exposition of the passage, confirmed as it is also by Cyprian, may, without doubt, be received as a fair expression of the sentiments and usages of the early church on this subject. "Peter did everything here with the common consent; nothing, by his own will and authority. He left the judgment to the multitude, to secure the respect

[3] Röhr, Kritischen Predigerbibliothek. Bd. 13. Heft. 6.

[4] D. Grossmann, Ueber eine Reformation der protestantischen Kirchenverfassung in Königreiche Sachsen. Leipsig, 1833, S. 47.

[5] Neander, Apost. Kirch. I. c. 1. Note.

[6] Greiling, Apostol. Kirchengemeine, S. 15.

to the elected, and to free himself from every invidious reflection." After quoting the words, "they appointed two," he adds, "he did not himself appoint them, it was the act of all."[7]

The order of the transaction appears to have been as follows: Peter stands up in the midst of the disciples, convened in assembly to the number of one hundred and twenty, and explains to them the necessity of choosing another apostle in the place of the apostate Judas, and urges them to proceed to the election. The whole assembly then designate two of their number as candidates for the office, and after prayer for divine direction, all cast lots, and the lot falls upon Matthias;[8] or, according to Mosheim, all cast their *votes*, and the vote falls upon Matthias. Whatever may have been the *mode* of the election, it appears to have been a popular vote, and indicates the inherent right of the people to make the election.

(*b*) The election of the seven deacons, Acts 6: 1—6.

Here again the proposition originated with the apostles. It was received with approbation by the whole multitude, who immediately proceeded to make the election by a united and public vote. The order of the transaction is very clearly marked. The apostles propose to "the multitude of the disciples" the appointment of the seven. The proposal is favorably received by "the whole multitude," who accordingly proceed to the choice of the proposed number, and set them before the apostles, not to ratify the election, but to induct them into office by the laying on of hands. This election is clearly set forth as the act of the whole assembly and is so universally admitted to have been made by a popular vote, that it may be passed without further remark. Indeed, "it is impossible," as Owen observes, "that there should be a more evident convincing instance and example

[7] Hom. ad locum, Vol. IX. p. 25. Comp. Cyprian, Ep. 68.
[8] Rothe, Anfänge der Christ. Kirch. S. 149.

of the free choice of ecclesiastical officers by the multitude or fraternity of the church, than is given us herein. Nor was there any ground or reason why this order and process should be observed, why the apostles would not themselves nominate and appoint persons, whom they saw and knew meet for this office to receive it, but that it was the right and liberty of the people, according to the mind of Christ, to choose their own officers, which they would not abridge or infringe."[9]

(*c*) The election of delegates of the churches.

These delegates were the fellow-laborers and assistants of the apostle, to accompany him in his travels, to assist in setting in order the churches, and generally to supply his lack of service to all the churches, the care of which came upon him. Such, according to Rothe, was Timothy, whom he commends as his fellow-laborer, Rom. 16: 21. 1 Thess. 3: 2, and associates with himself in salutation to the churches. Phil. 1: 1. 1 Thess. 1: 1. 2 Thess. 1: 1., etc. Such was Titus, 2 Cor. 8: 23. Silvanus, 1 Thess. 1: 1. 2 Thess 1: 1. Mark, Coloss. 4: 10. 1 Peter 5: 13. Clemens, Phil. 4: 3. Epaphras, Coloss. 1: 7, etc.[10]

But whatever may have been the specific duties of this office, the appointment to it was made by a vote of the church. One such assistant Paul greatly commends, who was appointed by the church *χειροτονηθεὶς ὑπο τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν*, 2 Cor. 8: 19, as his travelling companion. To this and the election of the seven deacons, Neander refers, as evidence of the manner in which this popular right was exercised in the churches. "Inasmuch as the apostles submitted the appointment of the deacons to the vote of the church, and that of the delegates who should accompany them in the name of the churches, we may infer that a similar course was pursued also in the appointment of other officers of the church."[11]

[9] Gospel Church, Chap. IV.
[10] Anfänge, I. S. 305—307.
[11] Allgemein. Gesch. I. S. 290.

Rothe appeals to the same example, as a clear instance of a popular election, and adds, that it harmonizes with the authority of Clement of Rome, who states explicitly, that where the apostles had established churches they appointed bishops and deacons, "*with the approbation of the whole church*," συνευδοκησάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας.[12]

(*d*) The election of presbyters.

That presbyters were elected by the church is a fair conclusion from the examples that have already been given. If the apostles submitted to the church the election of one of their number as an extraordinary and temporary minister, much more may they be supposed to have submitted to the same body the election of their ordinary pastors and teachers, the presbyters. Or, if there be any doubt as to the choice of Matthias by the church, there can be none of the election of the deacons and delegates by a popular vote. In this conclusion, we are sustained by the authority of Neander,[13] Rothe[14] and Mosheim. "That the presbyters of the primitive church of Jerusalem were elected by the suffrages of the people, cannot, I think, well be doubted by any one who shall have duly considered the prudence and moderation discovered by the apostles, in filling up the vacancy in their own number, and in appointing curators or guardians for the poor."[15] After having proceeded to invest the churches with the right of electing their own officers, can the apostles be supposed to have invaded this sacred right, by refusing to them the election of their own pastors and teachers?

These several instances of election chiefly relate to the church at Jerusalem. But wherever churches were planted by the apostles, they were, without doubt, organized after the original plan of that at Jerusalem: so that the above is a fair exhibition of the mode of appointment which generally prevailed in the churches. "The new churches," says

[12] Anfänge, I. S. 151. [13] As cited above.
[14] Mosheim, De Rebus Christ. Sæc. I. § 32.

Gieseler, "every where formed themselves on the model of the mother church at Jerusalem."[16] So also, Mosheim: "Since all these churches were constituted and formed after the model of that which was planted at Jerusalem, a review of the constitution and regulations of this one church alone will enable us to form a tolerably accurate conception of the form and discipline of all these primitive Christian assemblies."[17]

In the gentile churches the popular principle is more strongly marked than in the Jewish churches, but the organization of all appears, at first, to have been essentially the the same. At a later period, all may have been more or less modified by peculiar circumstances, and a greater difference may naturally appear in the government of different churches.

The conclusion therefore is, that the apostolical churches, generally, exercised the right of universal suffrage.

On the same principle, Paul and Barnabas may be presumed to have proceeded, when in their missionary tour, they appointed presbyters in the churches which they visited, Acts 14: 23. The question here turns wholly upon the interpretation of the term, χειροτονήσαντες, "*when they had ordained*," or, as in the margin, "*when with lifting up of hands they had chosen them.*"

If, according to the marginal reading, we understand, with our interpreters, the declaration to be, that the apostles made choice of these disciples, even this supposition does not necessarily exclude the members of the church themselves from participating in the election. It would imply rather, that Paul and his companion proceeded in the usual way by calling the attention of the churches to the election of their own presbyters; just as in the instructions which Paul gives to Titus and to Timothy, respecting the apppointment

[16] Cunningham's Trans. I. p. 56.
[17] De Rebus Christ., Sæc. I. § 87.

of presbyters and deacons for the churches of Ephesus and Crete respectively, the participation of these churches in the appointment is of necessity pre-supposed. For, "from the fact, that Paul, in committing to his pupils, as to Timothy and Titus, the organization of new churches, or of those which had fallen into many distractions, committed to them also the appointment of the presbyters and deacons, and directed their attention to the qualifications requisite for such offices,—*from this fact we are by no means to infer, that they themselves effected this alone, without the participation of the churches.* Much more, indeed, does the manner in which Paul himself is elsewhere wont to address himself to the whole church, and to claim the co-operation of the whole, authorize us to expect, that at least where there existed a church already established, he would have required their co-operation also in matters of common concern. But the supposition is certainly possible, that the apostle, in many cases, and especially in forming a new church, might think it best himself to propose to the church the persons best qualified for its officers, and such a nomination must naturally have had great weight. In the example of the family of Stephanus at Corinth, we see the members of the household first converted in the city, becoming, also, the first to fill the offices of the church."[18] Neander also asserts, that this mode of election, by the whole body of the church, remained unimpaired in the third century.[19]

The foregoing views of Neander, together with the following extract from Mosheim, give us a clear view of the manner in which the elective franchise was exercised in the primitive church, through the first three centuries of the Christian era. "To them (the multitude, or people) belonged the appointment of the bishop and presbyters, as well as of the inferior ministers,—with them resided the power

[18] Apost. Kirch. Vol. I. c. 5. p. 194.

[19] Neander, Allgem. Gesch. I. 323 seq. 340—342, 2d ed.

of enacting laws, as also of adopting or rejecting whatever might be proposed in the general assemblies, and of expelling and again receiving into communion any depraved or unworthy members. In short, nothing whatever, of any moment, could be determined on, or carried into effect, without their knowledge and concurrence."[20]

But the phrase itself, *χειροτονήσαντες*, may with great probability be understood to indicate that the appointment of these presbyters was by a public vote of the church.

(*α*) *This is the appropriate meaning of the term, χειροτονεῖν, which is here used.* It means, *to stretch out the hand, to hold up the hand,* as in voting; hence, *to give one's vote,* by holding up the hand, *to choose, to elect.* In this sense it is abundantly used in classic Greek. Demosthenes exhorts the Athenians in popular assembly to elect, *χειροτονῆσαι,* ten men to go on an embassy to the Thebans.* Again it is resolved by the senate and people of Athens to choose, *ἑλέσθαι,* five of the people to go on an embassy, which embassadors, thus chosen, *χειροτονηθέντας,* shall depart, etc. So it is rendered by Robinson, who, in the passage before us, translates it, *to choose by vote, to appoint.* Suidas also renders it by *ἐκλεξάμενοι, having chosen.* Such is the concurring authority of lexicographers.

(*β*) *This rendering is sustained by the common use of the term by early Christian writers.* The brother who accompanied Paul in his agency to make charitable collections for the suffering Jews in Judea, was *chosen of the churches* for this service, where the same word is used, *χειροτονηθείς.* "It will become you," says Ignatius to the church at Philadelphia, "as the church of God, *to choose, χειροτονῆσαι,* some deacon to go there," *i. e.,* to the church at Antioch.[21]

Again, to the church at Smyrna, "It will be fitting, and

[20] De Rebus Christ., Saec. I. §45.

* Oration on the Crown § 55. and § 9.

[21] Ad Phil. c. 10.

for the honor of God, that your church *elect*, *χειροτονῆσαι*, some worthy delegate," etc.[22]

The council of Neocaesarea directs that a presbyter should not be *chosen*, *μὴ χειροτονεῖσθω*, before he is thirty years old.[23] The council of Antioch forbids a bishop to be chosen, *χειροτονεῖσθω*, without the presence of the synod, and of the metropolitan;[24] and the apostolical canons direct that a bishop must be chosen, *χειροτονεῖσθω*, by two or three bishops.[25] Again, in the Greek version of the Codex Ecclesiæ Africanæ, the heading of the nineteenth canon is, that a bishop should not be chosen, *χειροτονεῖσθαι*, except by the multitude, *ἀπὸ πολλῶν*.[26]

The above examples all relate, neither to an official appointment or commission granted by another, nor to an *ordination* or consecration, but to an actual *election* by a plurality of voters. Do they not justify the supposition, that Paul and Barnabas, like the apostles in the case of Matthias, and of the seven deacons, led the church to a popular election of their presbyters?

(γ) *This mode of appointment was the established usage of the churches*, to which it may be presumed that Paul and Barnabas adhered, in the election of these presbyters. The appointment of Matthias the apostle, of the seven deacons, and of the delegates of the churches, as we have already seen, was by a public vote of the churches. And the same continued to be the authorized mode of appointment at the close of the apostolical age; as we learn from the epistle of Clement, cited above, who also rebukes the church of Corinth for rejecting from office those presbyters who had been chosen in this manner.[27] No other mode of appointment to any office in the church had, in any instance, been

[22] Ad Smyrn. c. 11.
[23] Conc. Neocæsar. c. 11.
[24] Conc. Antioch. c. 19.
[25] Can. Apost. c. 1.
[26] Cited by Suicer, ad verbum.
[27] Ep. I. ad Corinth. §44. See p. 65. note.

adopted, so far as we are informed; from all which, the inference is, that presbyters, like all other ecclesiastical officers, were appointed by vote of the church.

(δ) This conclusion is sustained by the most approved authorities. According to Suicer, the primary and appropriate signification of the term is, to denote *an election made by the uplifting of the hand*, and particularly denotes the election of a bishop by vote. "In this sense," he adds, "it continued for a long time to be used in the church denoting not an *ordination* or *consecration*, but an election."[28] Grotius,[29] Meyer,[30] and De Wette[31] so interpret the passage, to say nothing of Beza, Böhmer, Rothe and others.

To the same effect is also the following extract from Tindal. "We read only of the apostles, constituting elders *by the suffrages of the people*, Acts 14: 23, which, as it is the genuine signification of the Greek word, χειροτονήσαντες, so it is accordingly interpreted by Erasmus, Beza, Diodati, and those who translated the Swiss, French, Italian, Belgic, and even English Bibles, till the Episcopal correction, which leaves out the words, *by election*, as well as the marginal notes, which affirm that the apostles did not thrust pastors into the church through a lordly superiority, *but chose and placed them there by the voice of the congregation.*"[32] Tyndale's translation is as follows. "And when they had ordened them seniours by eleccion, in every congregacion, after they had preyde and fasted, they commennd them to God, on whom they beleved."

In view of the whole, must we not conclude, that presbyters, like all other ecclesiastical officers, were elected in the apostolical churches by the suffrages of the people?[33] And

[28] Thesaurus, Eccl. v. χειροτονέω. [29], [30], [31] Comment. ad locum.

[32] Rights of the Church, p. 358.

[33] "It may not have occurred to some of our readers," says the Edinburgh Review, "that the Greek word, ἐκκλησία, which we translate *church*, was the peculiar term used to denote the general assembly of the people in the old democracies, and that it essentially ex-

is not all this sufficient to justify the rendering above given, though the term be also occasionally used to denote either an official appointment, or the laying on of hands?

2. The historical argument, from the early Fathers.

When from the writings of the apostles we turn to the records of history, we find evidence sufficient to show that the churches continued, even after the rise of Episcopacy, to defend and to exercise the right of election,—that great principle which is the basis of religious liberty.

The earliest and most authentic authority on this subject, after that of the Scriptures themselves, is derived from Clement of Rome, contemporary with some of the apostles. This venerable father, in his epistle to the church at Corinth, about A. D. 96, or, according to Bishop Wake, "between the 60th and 70th year of Christ," speaks of the regulations which were established by the apostles, for the appointment of others to succeed them after their decease. This appointment was to be made *with the consent and approbation of the whole church*, *συνευδοκησάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας πάσης*, grounded on their previous knowledge of the qualifications of the candidate for this office. This testimony clearly indicates the active co-operation of the church in the appointment of their ministers.[34] "It may have been the custom

presses *a popularly constituted meeting*, and that such, in a great measure, was the original constitution of the Christian society."—*Baudry's Selections*, V. p. 319.

[34] The passage has been already cited, but it is here given at length, with the title of C. J. Hefele: "*Apostolorum institutio, ne de munere sacerdotuli contentio fiat. Legitime electos ac recte viventes de munere suo dejicere nefas.—Καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι ἡμῶν ἔγνωσαν διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅτι ἔρις ἔσται ἐπὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς. Διὰ ταύτην οὖν τὴν αἰτίαν πρόγνωσιν εἰληφότες τελείαν κατέστησαν τοὺς προειρημένους, καὶ μεταξὺ ἐπινομὴν δεδώκασιν, ὅπως, ἐὰν κοιμηθῶσιν, διαδέξωνται ἕτεροι δεδοκιμασμένοι ἄνδρες τὴν λειτουργίαν αὐτῶν. Τοὺς οὖν κατασταθέντας ὑπ' ἐκείνων, ἢ μεταξὺ*

for the presbyters to propose one to supply any vacancy which occurred; but it remained for the church to ratify or to reject the nomination."[35]

Tertullian in his Apology for Christians, against the heathen, A. D. 198 or 205, says that the elders came into their office *by the testimony of the people*, that is, by the suffrage or election of the people.[36] Their free and independent suffrages were the highest testimony which the people could give of their approbation of their elders.

The epistles of Ignatius, whether genuine or spurious, belong to the period of which we are now treating. These, as we have seen above, accord to the church the right of electing their own delegates.

Origen, in his last book against Celsus, about A. D. 240, speaks of the elders and rulers of the churches as *ἐκλεγόμενοι, chosen to their office*. In his sixth homily on Leviticus, he asserts that the presence of the people is required in the ordination of a priest; and the reason assigned for their intervention is to secure an impartial election, and the appointment to this office of one who possessed the highest qualifications for it. The whole passage implies the active cooperation of the people in the appointment of their ministers.[37]

ὑφ' ἑτέρων ἐλλογίμων ἀνδρῶν, συνευδοκησάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας πάσης, καὶ λειτουργήσαντας ἀμέμπτως τῷ ποιμνίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ ταπεινοφροσύνης, ἡσύχως καὶ ἀβαναύσως, μεμαρτυρημένους τε πολλοῖς χρόνοις ὑπὸ πάντων, τούτους οὐ δικαίως νομίζομεν ἀποβαλλέσθαι τῆς λειτουργίας. Ἁμαρτία γὰρ οὐ μικρὰ ἡμῖν ἔσται, ἐὰν τοὺς ἀμέμπτως καὶ ὁσίως προσενέγκοντας τὰ δῶρα τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ἀποβάλωμεν.

[35] Neander, Allgemein. Gesch. I. S. 323, 2d. ed.

[36] Praesident probati quique seniores honorem istum non pretio, sed *testimonio*, adepti.—*Apol.* c. 39.

[37] Requiritur enim in ordinando sacerdote et praesentia populi ut sciant omnes, et certe sint, quia qui praestantior est ex omni populo, qui doctior, qui sanctior, qui in omni virtute eminentior — ille eligi-

Cyprian, A. D. 258, most fully accords to the people the right of suffrage in the appointment of their spiritual teachers, declaring that they have the fullest authority to choose those who are worthy of this office, and to refuse such as may be unworthy. It was, according to this father, an *apostolic usage*, preserved by a *divine* authority in his day, and observed throughout the churches of Africa (*apud nos*), that a pastor, *sacerdos*, should be chosen publicly, in the presence of the people; and that by their decision thus publicly expressed, the candidate should be adjudged worthy to fill the vacant office, whether of deacon, presbyter or bishop. In accordance with these views, it was his custom, on all such occasions, to consult his clergy and the people before proceeding to ordain any one to the office of the ministry.[38]

So universal was the right of suffrage, and so reasonable, that it attracted the notice of the emperor, Alexander Severus, who reigned from A. D. 222 to 235. In imitation of the custom of the Christians and Jews, in the appointment of their priests, as he says, he gave to the people the right of rejecting the appointment of any procurator, or chief president of the provinces, whom he might nominate to such an office.[39] Their votes, however, in these cases, were not merely testimonial, but really judicial and elective.

tur ad sacerdotium, et hoc adstante populo, ne qua postmodum, retractatio cuiquam, ne quis scrupulus resideret.

[38] Plebs obsequens praeceptis dominicis et Deum metuens, a peccatore praeposito separare se debet nec se ad sacrilegi sacerdotis sacrificia miscere, quando ipsa maximè habeat potestatem vel *eligendi dignos sacerdotes, vel indignos recusandi*. Quod et ipsum videmus de divina auctoritate descendere ut sacerdos, *plebe presente*, sub omnium oculis deligatur, et dignus atque idoneus publico judicio ac testimonio comprobetur.—Diligentur, de traditione divina et apostolica observatione servandum est et tenendum quod apud nos quoque, et fe[illegible]per provincias universas tenetur, ut ad ordinationes rite celebran[illegible] ad eam plebem cui praepositus ordinatur, episcopi ejusdem pro[illegible]iae proximi quique conveniant et episcopus deligatur plebe prae[illegible]ente.—*Ep.* 68.

[39] Lampridius, in Vit. Alexandri Severi, c. 45.

The authorities above cited indicate that the suffrages of the church were directed by a previous nomination of the clergy. But there are on record instances in which the people, of their own accord, and by acclamation, elected individuals to the office of bishop or presbyter, without any previous nomination. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, was elected in this manner, A. D. 374.[40] Martin, of Tours, A. D. 375, was appointed in the same manner.[41] So also were Eustathius at Antioch, A. D. 310,[42] Chrysostom at Constantinople, A. D. 398,[43] Eraclius at Hippo,[44] and Miletus at Antioch.[45] It is also observable that these examples belong to a later age, the fourth century. They are therefore important as evidence, that people continued even at this late period to retain their rights in these popular elections.

It has been asserted, that the people were denied the right of suffrage by the 4th canon of the council of Nice. But Bingham has clearly shown that the people were not excluded by this canon from their ancient privilege in this respect.[46] And both Riddle,[47] and bishop Pearson, as quoted by him, concur with Bingham in opinion on this subject. Indeed the assertion is sufficiently refuted, by the fact, that Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, and others, were elected by popular vote immediately after the session of that council.

Daillé sums up the evidence on this subject in the following terms:—"It is clear that in the primitive times they [popular elections and ordinations] depended partly on the people, and not wholly on the clergy; but every company

[40] Paulin., Vit. Ambros, Rufin., Hist. Eccl. Lib. 2. c. 11; Theodoret, Hist. Eccl. Lib. 4. c. 6. p. 666; Sozomen, Hist. Eccl. Lib. 6. c. 24.

[41] Sulpic. Sev., Vit. e. Martini, c. 7.

[42] Theodoret, Hist. Eccl. Lib. 1. c. 6.

[43] Socrat., Hist. Eccl. Lib. 6. c. 2.

[44] Augustin., 4. Ep. 110. al. 213.

[45] Theodoret, Hist Ecc. Lib. 2. c. 27.

[46] Book 4. chap. 2. § 11. [47] Christ. Antiq. p. 286.

of the faithful either chose their own pastors, or else had leave to consider and to approve of those that were proposed to them for that purpose. Pontius, a deacon of the church of Carthage, says that "St. Cyprian, being yet a neophyte, was elected to the charge of pastor, and the degree of bishop by the judgment of God, and the favor of the people."[48] St. Cyprian also tells us the same in several places. In his 52nd epistle, speaking of Cornelius, he says, 'That he was made bishop of Rome by the judgment of God, and of his Christ, by the testimony of the greatest part of the clergy, by the suffrage of the people who were there present, and by the college of pastors, or ancient bishops, all good and pious men.'[49]

"It appears clear enough, both out of St. Hierome,[50] and by the acts of the council of Constantinople,[51] and of Chalcedon,[52] and also by the *Pontificale Romanum*,[53] and several other productions, that this custom continued a long time in the church."

This right in question is clearly admitted even in the Roman pontifical, in which the bishop, at the ordination of a priest is made to say, "It was not without good reason that the fathers had ordained that the advice of the people should be taken in the election of those persons who were to serve

[48] Judicio Dei, et plebis favore, ad officium sacerdotii, et episcopatus gradum adhuc neophytus, ut putabatur, novellus electus est.—*Pont. Diac. in vita Cypr.*

[49] Factus est autem Cornelius episcopus, de Dei et Christi ejus judicio, de clericorum penè omnium testimonio, de plebis, quæ tunc adfuit suffragio, et de sacerdotum antiquorum, et bonorum virorum collegio.—*Cyprian, Ep.* 52. *p.* 97.

[50] Hieron., Com. 10 .in Ezech. c. 33 Tom. III. p 935. et Com. in Agg. p. 512. t. 5. et Com. 1 in Ep. ad Gal. p. 271. t. 6.

[51] Conc. Const., 1. in Ep. ad Damas. p. 94 et 95. t. 1. Conc. Gener.

[52] Conc. Chalced., act. 11. p. 375. t. 2. Conc. Gen., et act. 16. p. 430, etc.

[53] Pontific. Rom. in Ordinat. Presbyter. fol. 38, vide supr. l. 1. c. 4.

at the altar; to the end that having given their assent to their ordination they might the more readily yield obedience to those who were so ordained."[54] This passage is cited by Daillé, who remarks, that an honest canon of Valencia very gravely proposed to the council of Trent, that this, and all such authorities should be blotted out; so that no trace or footstep of them should remain in future, for heretics to bring against them for having taken away this right!

Bingham,[55] and Chancellor King,[56] and multitudes of the most respectable writers in the communion of the Episcopal church, fully sustain the foregoing representations of the right of suffrage as enjoyed by the primitive churches. They are clearly supported by the late Dr. Burton,[57] and by Riddle, both of Oxford University, and by the best authorities both ancient and modern. "The mode of appointing bishops and presbyters," says Riddle, "has been repeatedly changed. Election by the people, for instance, has been discontinued. This is indeed, in the estimation of Episcopalians, a great improvement, but still, as they must allow, it is a change."[58]

For what term of time the several churches continued in the full enjoyment of the right of suffrage, we are not distinctly informed. We can only say with Mosheim, "This power of appointing their elders continued to be exercised by the members of the church at large, as long as primitive manners were retained entire; and those who ruled over the churches did not conceive themselves at liberty to introduce any deviation from the apostolic model."[59] The reader will

[54] Neque enim frustra à patribus institutum, ut de electione illorum qui ad regimen altaris adhibendi sunt, consulatur etiam populus; quia de vita et conversatione praesentandi, quod nonunquam ignoratur à pluribus, scitur à paucis; et necesse est, et facilius ei quis obedientiam exhibeat ordinatio cui assensum praebuerit ordinando.—*Pontif. Rom. De Ordinat. Pres.* fol. 38.

[55] Book 4. c. 6.

[56] Part I. c. 3.—c. 6.

[57] Church History, c. 12.

[58] Christ. Antiq., Preface, p. 76.

[59] De Rebus Christ., Saec. I. § 39.

find an able discussion of this whole subject, also, and an extended collection of authorities in Blondell's treatise, De Plebis in Electionibus jure.[60]

II. Abridgment and final extinction of the right of suffrage.

The sovereign rights of the people, and their free elective franchise began, at an early period, to be invaded. The final result of these changes was a total disfranchisement of the laity, and the substitution of an ecclesiastical despotism, in the place of the elective government of the primitive church. Of these changes one of the most effective was the attempt, by means of correspondence and ecclesiastical synods, to consolidate the churches into one church universal, to impose upon them a uniform code of laws, and establish an ecclesiastical polity administered by the clergy. The idea of a holy catholic church, and of an ecclesiastical hierarchy for the government of the same, was wholly a conception of the priesthood. Whatever may have been the motives with which this doctrine of the unity of the church was promulgated, it prepared the way for the overthrow of the popular government of the church.

Above all, the doctrine of the divine right of the priesthood aimed a fatal blow at the liberties of the people. The clergy were no longer the servants of the people, chosen by them to the work of the ministry, but a privileged order, like the Levitical priesthood; and, like them, by divine right invested with peculiar prerogatives. Elated with the pride of their divine commission, a degenerate and aspiring priesthood sought, by every means, to make themselves independent of the suffrages of the people. This independence they began by degrees to assert and to exercise. The bishop began, in the third century, to appoint at pleasure his own deacons, and other inferior orders of the clergy. In

[60] Apologia pro St. Hieron. pp. 379—549.

other appointments, also, he endeavored to disturb the freedom of the elections, and to direct them agreeably to his own will.[61]

And yet Cyprian, even in the middle of that century, apologized to the laity and clergy of his diocese for appointing one Auretius to the office of reader. In justification of this measure, he pleads the extraordinary virtues of the candidate, the urgent necessity of the case, and the impossibility of consulting them as he was wont to do on all such occasions.[62] Such, however, was the progress of Episcopal usurpation, that by the middle of the fourth century, elections by the people were nearly lost;[63] and from the beginning of the fifth century, the bishop proceeded to claim the appointment even of the presbyters, together with the absolute control of all ecclesiastical offices subordinate to his own episcopate. But down to the fourth century, the bishops were not at liberty ever to license one to perform the duties of a presbyter, without first obtaining the approbation of the people. Such at least was still the rule in many places.[64]

Against these encroachments of ecclesiastical ambition and power the people continued to oppose a firm but ineffectual resistance. They asserted, and in a measure maintained, their primitive right of choosing their own spiritual teachers.[65] The usage of the churches of Africa has been al-

[61] Pertsch. Kirch. Gesch., drit. Jahrhund. S. 439—452. Planck, Gesell. Verfassung, I. 183.

[62] In ordinationibus clericis, Fratres carissimi, solemus vos ante consulere, et mores ac merita singulorum, communi consilio penderari, Ep. 33.

[63] Pertsch. 4. Jahrhund. S. 263.

[64] Riddle's Eccl. Chron., A. D. 400. Planck, Vol. I. p. 183. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 6. 43.

[65] Gieseler, Vol. I. 272. For a more full and detailed account of these changes of ecclesiastical policy, and of the means by which they were introduced, the reader is referred to the first volume of J. G. Planck, Gesch. der Christ. kirch. Gesellschaftsverfassung, Bd. I. 149—212, 433 seq.

ready mentioned. Examples are given by Böhmer,[66] in evidence that this right was still recognized in the churches of Spain and of Rome.[67] Later still, in the fourth century, an instance occurred in the Eastern church, in Cappadocia, of the controlling influence of these popular elections. The people, after having been divided in their choice between different candidates, united their suffrages in the election of an individual high in office in the state, who had not even been baptized. He accordingly received this ordinance at the hands of the bishops present, and was duly invested with his office. In the Western church, the election of Martin of Tours, A. D. 375, above mentioned, was carried by the popular voice, against the decided disapprobation of the bishops present. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, A. D. 374, was also appointed by the unanimous acclamation of the multitude, previously even to his baptism. On the other hand, there are on record, instances in the fourth, and even in the fifth century, when the appointment of a bishop was effectually *resisted*, by the refusal of the people to ratify the nomination of the candidate to a vacant see.[68]

But notwithstanding all these examples, in which the people successfully asserted their ancient right of suffrage, it became, as early as the fifth century, little else than an empty name. Their elections degenerated into a tumultuous and unequal contest with a crafty and aspiring hierarchy, who had found means so to trammel and control the elective franchise, as practically to direct, at pleasure, all ecclesiastical appointments. The rule had been established by decree of council, and often repeated, requiring the presence and *unanimous concurrence of all the provincial bishops* in the election

[66] Christ. kirch. Alterthumswissenschaft, I. S. 144 seq

[67] Presbyterio vel episcopatui, si eum cleri ac *plebis* vocaverit *electio*, non immerito societur.—Siricius, bishop of Rome, A. D. 384. Ep. 1. ad Himer. c. 10.

[68] Greg. Naz., Orat. 10. Comp. Orat. 14. p. 308. 21. p. 377. Bingham, B. IV. c. 1. § 3. Planck, I. 440. n. 10.

and ordination of one to the office of bishop. This afforded them a convenient means of defeating any popular election, by an affected disagreement among themselves. The same canonical authority had made the *concurrence of the metropolitan* necessary to the validity of any appointment. His veto was accordingly another efficient expedient by which to baffle the suffrages of the people, and to constrain them into a reluctant acquiescence in the will of the clergy.[69]

Elections to ecclesiastical offices were also disturbed by the interference of secular influence from without, in consequence of that disastrous union of church and state, which was formed in the fourth century, under Constantine the Great.

"During this century," the fourth, "1. The emperors convened, and presided in, general councils; 2. Confirmed their decrees; 3. Enacted laws relative to ecclesiastical matters by their own authority; 4. Pronounced decisions concerning heresies and controversies; 5. Appointed bishops; 6. Inflicted punishment on ecclesiastical persons.

"Hence arose complaints that the bishops had conceded too much to the emperors, while, on the other hand, some persons maintained that the emperors had left too much on the hands of the bishops. The bishops certainly did possess too much power and influence, to the prejudice of the other clergy, and especially to the disadvantage of Christians at large.

"Thus the emperor and the bishops share the chief government of the church between them. But the limits of their authority were not well defined. Great part of the power formerly possessed by the general body of Christians, the laity, had passed into the hands of the civil governor."[70]

Agitated and harassed by the conflict of these discordant

[69] Conc. Nic. c. 4. Conc. Antioch, c. 19. Carthag. IV. c. 1, 22. Planck, Vol. I. pp. 433—452.

[70] Riddle's Chronology, pp. 70, 71.

elements, the popular assemblies for the election of men to fill the highest offices of the holy ministry, became scenes of tumult and disorder that would disgrace a modern political canvass. "Go and witness the proceedings at our public festivals, especially those in which, according to rule, the elections of ecclesiastical officers are held. One supports one man; another, another; and the reason is, that all overlook that which they ought to consider, the qualifications, intellectual and moral, of the candidate. Their attention is turned to other points, by which their choice is determined. One is in favor of a candidate of noble birth; another, of a man of wealth, who will not need to be supported by the revenues of the church; a third votes for one who has come over from some opposite party; a fourth gives his influence in favor of some relative or friend; while another is gained by the flatteries of a demagogue."[71] Repeated notices of similar disturbances occur in the ecclesiastical writers of that period.[72]

To correct these disorders, various but ineffectual expedients were adopted at different times and places. The council of Laodicea, A. D. 361, c. 13, excluded the multitude, *τοῖς ὄχλοις, the rabble*, from taking part in the choice of persons for the sacred office, apparently with the design of preventing these abuses, without excluding the better portion of the laymen from a participation in the elections. The expedient, however, was of little avail.

[71] De Sacerdot. Lib. 3. c. 15.

[72] August., Ep. 155. Synessii, Ep. 67. Sidon, Apollinar. Lib. IV. Ep. 25, and other passages collected by Baronius, Annal. 303. n. 22 seq. and in Baluzii Miscell. tom. 2. Ammianus Marcellinus gives the following representation of the unholy contest of the two rival candidates, Damasus and Ursinus, for appointment to the Episcopal see at Rome:—"Supra humanum modum ad rapiendam episcopatus sedem ardentes, scissis studiis asperrime conflictabantur, ad usque mortis, vulnerumque discrimina adjumentis utriusque progressis. Et in certatione superaverat Damasus, parte quae ei favebat instante."—*Lib.* 28. *Ep.* 3.

In the Latin Church, and especially in that of Africa, an attempt was made to restore order and simplicity in these elections by means of *interventors*, or *visitors*, whose duty it was to visit the vacant diocese, and influence the clergy and people to harmonize their discordant interests, that thus the way might be prepared for a quiet and regular election. By this means, the visitor had a fair opportunity, as Bingham justly remarks, "to ingratiate himself with the people, and promote his own interests among them, instead of those of the church."[73] This measure though supported by Symmachus,[74] in the sixth century, and by Gregory the Great,[75] failed to produce the desired effect; and seems neither to have been generally adopted nor long continued.

Justinian, in the sixth century, sought, with no better success, to remedy the evils in question, by limiting the elective franchise to a mixed aristocracy, composed of the *clergy*, and the *chief men* of the city. These were jointly to nominate three candidates, declaring under oath, that, in making the selection, they had been influenced by no sinister motive. From these three the ordaining person was to ordain the one whom he judged best qualified.[76] But it was not defined who should be included among the chief men, and the result was the loss of the people's rights, and an increase of the factions which the measure was intended to prevent. The council of Arles, A. D. 452, c. 54, in like manner, ordered the *bishops to nominate three candidates*, from whom the clergy and the people should make the election; and that of Barcelona, A. D. 593, ordered the *clergy* and *people* to make the nomination, and the *metropolitan* and *bishops* were to determine the election by lot.

But even these ineffectual efforts to restore, in some mea-

[73] Book II. c. 15. § 1. Comp. Book IV. c. 11. § 7.
[74] Ep. 5. c. 6. [75] Ep. Lib. 9. Ep. 16.
[76] Justin., Novell. 123. c. 1, 137. c. 2d. Cod. Lib. 1. tit. 3. De Episcop. leg. 42.

sure, the right of the people, sufficiently show to what extent it was already lost. Indeed, the bishops had already assumed to themselves, in some instances, the independent and exclusive right of appointing spiritual officers.[77] The emperor Valentinian III. complains of Hilary of Arles, that he unworthily ordained some in direct opposition to the will of the people; and that, when they refused those whom they had not chosen, he collected an armed body, and by military power forcibly thrust into office the ministers of the gospel of peace.[78] Leo the Great, A. D. 450, asserts the right of the people to elect their spiritual rulers.[79]

The government of the church, from a pure democracy, had changed, first into an ambitious aristocracy, and then into a more oppressive oligarchy, which, assuming practically the sentiment of a crafty tyrant, *οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη*,[80] directed its assaults against that most sacred principle both of civil and religious liberty,—the right of every corporate body to choose its own rulers and teachers. This extinction of religious freedom was not effected in the church universally at the same time, nor in every place by the same means. Oppressed by violence, overreached by stratagem, or awed into submission by superstition, the churches severally yielded the contest at different and somewhat distant intervals. In Rome, the rights of the people were recognized under Cœlestia, A. D. 422,[81] and Leo the Great, A. D. 440, which, as we have seen, Justinian attempted to restore in the century following. In Gaul, these rights were not wholly lost until the fifth,[82] and even the sixth century.[83]

[77] Sidon, Apollinar. Lib. IV. Ep. 25.

[78] Valentinian III. Nov. XXIV. ad calcem Cod. Theodos.

[79] Qui praefecturus omnibus, ab omnibus eligatur. Ep. 89. Comp. Ep. 84. c. 5.

[80] Iliad, II. 204. Paraphrased by Pope, in the following lines:

> Be silent, wretch, and think not here allowed
> That worst of tyrants, *an usurping crowd*.—Pope.

[81] Ep. 2. c. 5. [82] Sidon, Apollinar. Lib. IV. Ep. 25.

[83] Conc. Orleans, A. D. 549. c. 10.

The doctrine that to the clergy was promised a divine guidance from the Spirit of God had its influence also in completing the subjugation of the people. This vain conceit, by ceaseless repetition on the part of bishops and councils, became an unquestionable dogma of the church. Once established, it had great influence in bringing the people into passive submission to their spiritual oppressors. Resistance to such an authority under the infallible guidance of God's Spirit, was rebellion against high heaven, which the laity had not the impiety to maintain.

"Thus everything was changed in the church. At the beginning it was a society of brethren; and now an absolute monarchy is reared in the midst of them. All Christians were priests of the living God, 1 Pet. 2: 9, with humble pastors for their guidance. But a lofty head is uplifted from the midst of these pastors. A mysterious voice utters words full of pride; an iron hand compels all men, small and great, rich and poor, freemen and slaves, to take the mark of its power. The holy and primitive equality of souls is lost sight of. Christians are divided into two strangely unequal classes. On the one side, a separate class of priests daring to usurp the name of the church, and claiming to be possessed of peculiar privileges in the sight of the Lord. On the other, timid flocks, reduced to a blind and passive submission; a people gagged and silenced, and delivered over to a proud caste."[84]

The interference of the secular power with ecclesiastical appointments has been already mentioned. The civil magistrate often exercised the same arbitrary power in these matters which the priesthood had usurped over the people, so that the oppressor became in turn the oppressed. This secular interference began with Constantine. Both in the Eastern and the Western church, it was often the means of

[84] D'Aubigné's Hist. of the Reformation, I. p. 31.

disturbing and overruling the appointment of ecclesiastical officers, and finally itself completed the extinction of religious liberty. Valentinian III. A. D. 445, for example, enacted, that all bishops of the Western empire should obey the bishop of Rome, and should be bound to appear before him at his summons.[85] Constantius appointed Liberius to be bishop of Rome, A. D. 353, and the Gothic kings in the sixth century exercised the same arbitrary power over the churches of France and Spain.[86]

In the Eastern church, Theodosius I. also appointed Nectarius bishop of Constantinople, A. D. 381;[87] and Theodosius II, in the same summary manner, appointed Proilus, A. D. 434, to succeed Maximian in the same place. Of the vehemence with which the church sometimes protested against these encroachments of secular power, we have a remarkable example in the sixth canon of the council of Paris, A. D. 557. "Seeing that ancient custom and the regulations of the church are neglected, we desire that no bishop be consecrated against the will of the citizens. And only such persons shall be considered eligible to this dignity, who may be appointed, not by command of the prince, but by the election of the people and clergy; which election must be confirmed by the metropolitan and the other bishops of the province. Any one who may enter upon this office *by the mere authority of the king*, shall not be recognized by the other bishops; and if any bishop should recognize him, he must himself be deposed from his office."[88] The eighth council of Rome, also, A. D. 853, forbade, on pain of excommunication, "all lay persons whatsoever, even princes themselves, to meddle in the election or promotion of any patriarch, metropolitan, or any other bishop

[85] Riddle's Eccl. Chron. p. 103.
[86] Simonis, Vorlesungen über die christlichen Allerthümer p. 106.
[87] Böhmer's Alterthumswissenschaft, Vol. 1. p. 151.
[88] Conc. Paris, c. 8.

whatever, declaring withal, that it is not fit that lay persons should have anything at all to do in these matters; it becoming them rather to be quiet, and patiently to attend until such time as the election of the bishop who is to be chosen, be regularly finished by the college of the church."[89]

Such demands for the institution of *apostolical* and *canonical elections*, as they were called,[90] were, however, but rarely made, and never with success. The clergy were brought to bow to a usurpation more absolute and despotic than that by which they had at first wrested from the laity those rights, which, in their turn, they were reluctantly compelled to resign to the secular power, until at length the pope, that prince of tyrants, became the supreme head of all power, whether ecclesiastical or secular. Innocent III. at the close of the twelfth century, described himself as "the successor of St. Peter, set up by God to govern not only the church but the whole world. As God," said he, "has placed two great luminaries in the firmament, the one to rule the day, and the other to give light by night, so has he established two great powers, the pontifical and the royal; and as the moon receives her light from the sun, so does royalty borrow its splendor from the papal authority!"

REMARKS.

The right of suffrage involves all the great principles of a popular government. The rights and privileges belonging to

[89] Neminem laicorum principum, vel Potentum semet inserere electioni vel promotioni Patriarchæ, vel Metropolitæ, aut cujuslibet episcopi, etc. præsertim cùm nullam in talibus potestatem quenquam potestativorum, vel ceterorum laicorum habere conveniat, sed potiùs silere, ac attendere sibi, usque quò regulariter à collegio ecclesiæ suscipiat finem electio futuri pontificis.—*Conc.* 8. *Con.* 12. t. 3. *Conc.* p. 282.

[90] Gregory Naz. Orat. 21.

such a government, the apostles, under the guidance of wisdom from on high, studiously sought to protect, in framing the constitution which they gave to the churches; as the following remarks may serve to show.

1. The right of suffrage is the first element of a popular government, in the church.

The right to elect our rulers and teachers, presupposes the right to adopt our own form of government, to frame our constitution, to enact our laws, to exercise the prerogatives and enjoy the privileges of a free and independent body. The enjoyment of this right constitutes freedom; the absence of it, slavery.

2. The right to elect their own pastors and teachers is the inherent right of every church.

If it be true, that all men are endowed, by their Creator, with certain inalienable rights, among which are "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," then much more is liberty of conscience, and the pursuit of future blessedness, the inherent, inalienable right of man. What is the life that now is, to that which is to come; or the happiness of earth, to the bliss of heaven? Such are the religious to the civil rights of any people, all of which are involved in the enjoyment of the elective franchise, and are lost to a disfranchised laity. This consideration was lately urged in the hearing of the writer, with great pertinency and force, by a speaker in the House of Lords, on a motion relating to the religious liberty of the church of Scotland. "The choice of a pastor," the noble Lord proceeded to say, "was really a measure of more importance, and, by the members of that church, was regarded as an event more interesting than the election of a member of Parliament; for it affected their religious interests,—interests to them and to their children, high as heaven, and lasting as eternity."

3. The right of suffrage preserves a just balance of power between the lay members of the church and the clerical order,—between the laity and the clergy.

The sacred office of the clergy, coupled with learning and talents, gives them, under any form of government, a controlling influence. If to all this be added the exclusive right of making and executing the laws, and of electing the officers, the balance of power between the clergy and the people is destroyed. The restraints and checks which the clergy ought to feel against the exercise of arbitrary power are removed. The history of the church sufficiently shows that the dangerous prerogatives of prelatical power cannot, with safety, be entrusted to any body of men, however great or good. Accordingly, as in all free governments, the sovereign power is vested in the people, so in the primitive church, this great principle of religious as well as of civil liberty was carefully observed. The people were made the depositaries of the sovereign power. The enactment of the laws and the appointment of their officers belonged to them.[91]

4. The loss of this right brings with it the extinction of religious liberty.

The free church of Scotland, by their late secession, have had the magnanimity to resign the heritage of their ancestors, and go out from the sanctuary where their fathers worshipped, taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods, rather than submit to the loss of their religious rights. In the manifesto, which they have published, as their declaration of independence, they complain that their religious liberty has been invaded by the civil courts; whereas the church of Christ is, and of right ought to be, free, and independent of all spiritual jurisdiction from the state. We subjoin an extract from this manifesto, which clearly sets forth the

[91] Riddle, Eccl. Chr. p. 13. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 5. 24.

wrongs that they must suffer under this spiritual bondage to which they have nobly refused to bow down themselves:

(*a*) "That the courts of the church as now established, and members thereof, are liable to be coerced by the civil courts in the exercise of their spiritual functions; and in particular in their admission to the office of the holy ministry, and the constitution of the pastoral relation, and that they are subject to be compelled to intrude ministers on reclaiming congregations in opposition to the fundamental principles of the church, and their views of the word of God, and to the liberties of Christ's people.

(*b*) "That the said civil courts have power to interfere with and interdict the preaching of the gospel, and administration of ordinances as authorized and enjoined by the church courts of the establishment.

(*c*) "That the said civil courts have power to suspend spiritual censures pronounced by the church courts of the establishment against ministers and probationers of the church, and to interdict their execution as to spiritual effects, functions, and privileges.

(*d*) "That the said civil courts have power to reduce and set aside the sentences of the church courts of the establishment, deposing ministers from the office of the holy ministry, and depriving probationers of their license to preach the gospel, with reference to the spiritual states, functions, and privileges of such ministers and probationers,—restoring them to the spiritual office and status of which the church had deprived them.

(*e*) "That the said civil courts have power to determine on the right to sit as members of the supreme and other judicatories of the church by law established, and to issue interdicts against sitting and voting therein, irrespective of the judgment and determination of the said judicatories.

(*f*) "That the said civil courts have power to supersede the majority of a church court of the establishment, in regard

to the exercise of its spiritual functions as a church court, and to authorize the minority to exercise the said functions, in opposition to the court itself and to the superior judicatories of the establishment.

(*g*) "That the said civil courts have power to stay processes of discipline pending before courts of the church by law established, and to interdict such courts from proceeding therein.

(*h*) "That no pastor of a congregation can be admitted into the church courts of the establishment and allowed to rule as well as to teach, agreeably to the institution of the office by the Head of the church, nor to sit in any of the judicatories of the church, inferior or supreme, and that no additional provision can be made for the exercise of spiritual discipline among members of the church, though not affecting any patrimonial interests, and no alteration introduced in the state of pastoral superintendence and spiritual discipline in any parish without the coercion of a civil court.

"All which jurisdiction and power on the part of the said civil courts severally above specified, whatever proceedings may have given occasion to its exercise, is, in our opinion, in itself inconsistent with Christian liberty,—with the authority which the Head of the church hath conferred on the church alone."

5. The free exercise of the elective franchise is one of the most effectual means of guarding against the introduction of unworthy men into the ministry.

The common people best know the private character of the minister. They have a deep interest in it. They seek the spiritual welfare of themselves and their children, in the selection of their pastor. These are precisely the considerations assigned for continuing to the people the right of election in the ancient church, after the rise of Episcopacy.[92]

[92] It was, according to Cyprian, a divine tradition and apostolical

On the contrary, he who has a living at his disposal, is often ignorant of the true character of him who seeks a preferment. A thousand sinister motives may bias his judgment. He may be the most unsuitable man possible for such a trust.[93] In a word, who does not know that the curse of a graceless ministry has ever rested upon the church, to a greater or less extent, wherever they have not enjoyed the right of electing their own pastors? The rich and quiet livings of an establishment, especially if coupled with the authority, the distinction and emoluments of the Episcopal office, will ever be an object of ambition to worldly men. "Make me a bishop," said an ancient idolater, "make me a bishop, and I will surely be a Christian."

6. The free enjoyment of the elective franchise, is one of the best means of guarding the church against the inroads of error.

The Puseyism of the day is a delusion of the priesthood. The writer has often been assured in England that few, comparatively, of the common people are led away by it. And in this country we have lately seen the laity nobly struggling to resist diocesan despotism. So it has ever been; the delusions and heresies that have overrun the church, have origi-

custom, observed by the African church, and throughout almost all the provinces, that the election is to be performed in the presence of the people of the place, who fully know every man's life, and in their very intimate acquaintance, have carefully observed his habitual conversation. Episcopus deligatur, plebe præsente, quæ singulorum vitam plenissime novit, et uniuscujusque actum de ejus conversatione perspexerit... Coram omni synagoga jubet Deus constitui sacerdotem, id est, instruit atque ostendit ordinationes sacerdotales nonnisi, sub populi assistentis conscientia fieri opportere ut, *plebe praesente, vel detegantur malorum crimina, vel bonorum merita praedicentur*, ... Quod utique idcirco tam diligenter et caute, convocata plebe, tota gerebatur, ne quis ad altaris ministerium, vel ad sacerdotalem locum *indignus obreperet*—*Cyprian*, Ep. 68.

[93] Tracts for the Times, No. 59. p. 413.

nated with the clergy.[94] But in a ministry having no dependence upon the people, will be found, if any where, irreligious and dangerous men, who, caring little for the real interests of their flocks, will substitute their own delusions[95] for those simple truths which an intelligent and virtuous people delight to hear, and which a godly ministry would desire to preach. Leave then, the choice of the clergyman in the hands of the people. They will most carefully seek for one who is sound in the faith, and devoted to the sacred work; they will soonest reject one who may seek to pervert the truth of God. Upon the laity alone can we rely to see to it that the church is furnished with ministers who shall be the best defenders of the faith, by the authority of their learning and the piety of their lives.

7. The right of suffrage promotes mutual attachment between pastor and people, and the spiritual edification of the church.

[94] "If you were to take the *great mass of the people* of England, you would find a burst of righteous indignation against them (the Tractarians). They would say, If we are to have popery, let us have honest old popery, at once. If you are right, you do not go far enough; and if you are wrong, you go too far"—*Rev. Mr. Stowell, cited in Letters to the Laity, p.* 34.

[95] "When the prerogative and pre-eminence of any single person in the church began to be in esteem, not a few who failed in their attempts of attaining it, to revenge themselves on the church, made it their business to invent and propagate pernicious heresies. So did Thebulis, at Jerusalem, Euseb., lib. 4. cap. 22. and Valentinus, Tertul. ad Val., cap. 4. and Marcion, at Rome, Epiphan. Hæres, 42. Montanus fell into his dotage on the same account; so did Novitianus at Rome, Euseb. lib. 7. cap. 43. and Arius, at Alexandria. Hence is that censure of them by Lactantius, lib. 4. cap. 30. 'Ii quorum fides fuit lubrica, cum Deum nosse se et colere simularent, augendis opibus et honori studentes, affectabant maximum sacerdotium, et a potioribus victi, secedere cum suffragatoribus maluerunt, quam eos ferre præpositos quibus concupierant ipsi ante præponi."—*Owen, Works*, Vol. XX. p. 169.

The people receive instruction, with affectionate interest and confidence, from the lips of the preacher whom they have appointed over themselves, from the man of their own choice; while he, in turn, speaks to them in the fulness and confidence of reciprocal love. On the other hand, the ministrations of a priesthood which is imposed upon a people, are felt to be a hireling service, in which neither speaker nor hearer can have equal interest.

Finally. It produces the most efficient ministry.

This is a general conclusion, drawn from the foregoing considerations, and a position established by the whole history of the church. It contradicts all history, and all the principles of human conduct, to suppose, that an independent Establishment, in which the priesthood are settled down at ease in their livings, can have the vigorous efficiency and moral power of a clergy, the tenure of whose office depends upon their activity and usefulness.

CHAPTER V.

DISCIPLINE BY THE CHURCHES.

THE discipline of the apostolical churches was administered by each body of believers collectively; and continued to be under their control until the third or fourth century. About this period the simple and efficient discipline of the primitive church was exchanged for a complicated and oppressive system of penance administered by the clergy. But the church itself possesses the only legitimate authority for the administration of discipline. Its members form a voluntary association. They have the right to enact their own laws, and to prescribe such conditions of membership with themselves, as they may judge expedient and agreeable to the word of God. The right to administer ecclesiastical discipline was guaranteed to the churches from their first organization under the apostles; but was finally lost by the usurpation of the priesthood under the Episcopal hierarchy.

I. The right to administer ecclesiastical discipline was originally vested in the church itself.

The argument in support of this proposition is derived:

1. From the Scriptures.
2. From the early Fathers.
3. From the authority of modern ecclesiastical writers.
4. From the fact, that the entire government of the church was vested in that body itself.

1. The argument from Scripture.

Our Lord himself is generally supposed to teach, in Matt. 18: 15—18, that the public discipline of offenders should be administered by the authority of the church.

These instructions are understood to have been given prospectively, and to contain the rules by which the discipline of the Christian church should be administered. But whether given prospectively, with reference to the Christian church which was about to be established, or designed to exhibit the proper mode of procedure in the discipline of the Jewish synagogue, they doubtless develope the *principle* on which ecclesiastical censure should be conducted under the Christian dispensation. Vitringa has clearly shown that the directions of our Lord, in this instance, accord with the established usage of the synagogue, which, as we have already seen, was the pattern of the primitive church, both in its government and forms of worship. He has shown, fully, that this sentence was to be pronounced in accordance with a popular vote in public assembly; and that the same course of procedure was to be the rule of the Christian church. The church therefore, like the synagogue,[1] is the ecclesiastical court of impeachment for the trial of offences. If private remonstrance proves ineffectual, the case is to be brought before the church convened in public assembly; to be adjudged by a public vote of that body, after the manner of the Jewish synagogue.

This rule of discipline was also established in the Christian church by *apostolical* authority.

We have on record one instance of a trial before the church which was instituted by the command of the apostle Paul, and conducted throughout agreeably to his instructions. A Christian convert in Corinth, and a member of

[1] Vitringa, De Synagoga Vet. Lib. 3. p. 1. c. 9. Augusti, Denkwürdigkeiten, IX. S. 43. seq. Pfaff, De Originibus Juris Eccles. p. 99.

the church which had recently been established in that city, had maintained an incestuous connexion with his father's wife. This shocking sin, unexampled even among the Gentiles, the apostle rebukes with righteous abhorrence. The transgressor ought to be put away from among them; and, uniting with them as if present in their assembly convened for the purpose, Paul resolves to deliver him unto Satan, in the name, and with the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, i. e., by the help and with the authority of the Lord, 1 Cor. 5: 3—5.

Upon this passage we remark:

(*a*) The decision was not an official act of the apostle, a sentence pronounced by his authority alone. It was the act of the church. Absent in body, but present in spirit with them when assembled together, the apostle pronounces his decision *as if acting and co-operating with them.* By this parenthetic sentence, "When ye are gathered together, and my spirit," he indicates the intervention and co-operation of the church in the sentence pronounced upon the transgressor. "The apostle," says De Wette,[2] "qualifies the earnestness with which he speaks in the third verse, by reference, first, to the authority of Christ, and secondly, to the co-operation of the church; agreeably to the republican spirit of ancient Christianity, personating himself as present in spirit in their assembly." Such also is Neander's interpretation of the passage. "When the apostle speaks of an excommunication from the church, he regards himself as united in spirit with the whole church, 1 Cor. 5: 4, setting forth the rule, that their action is requisite in all such concerns of general interest.[3]" Even in this very chapter, he refuses to be himself the judge in such cases, submitting them to the church themselves. "What have I to do to judge them

[2] Comment. ad locum.

[3] Allgem. Gesch. I. S. 292. Comp. S. 350. Apost. Kirch. I. pp. 319, 320.

that are without?" i. e., men of the world, "Do not ye judge them that are within?" i. e., members of the church. "But them that are without God judgeth," κρίνει, or rather κρινεῖ, *will judge*, which is the approved reading. "*Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person*," vs. 12, 13.

The severe censure with which the apostle reflects upon the Corinthians for tolerating the offender so long, shows that the responsibility rested with them. They should have put away this offence from among them.[4] But if it was wholly the act of the apostle, why censure them for neglecting to do that which they had no right or authority to do? Are the members of the Episcopal church to be blamed for the general neglect of discipline in their communion, while the clergy have the sole power of administering that discipline? Neither could the Corinthians deserve censure, unless they had authority to administer the discipline which they had neglected. Both here, and in 2 Cor. 2: 3—11, the apostle refers distinctly to their neglect in this matter.

Again, in 2 Cor. 2: 6, he speaks of the excommunication as the act of the church. The punishment was inflicted, ὑπὸ τῶν πλειόνων, "of many," i. e., by *the many*, the majority. Bilroth paraphrases this in connection with the preceding verse, as follows: "Whether he, or the offender, have caused grief to me, comes not into consideration. It is not that *I* must suffer for him, but *you;* at least, a part of you; for I will not be unjust, and charge you *all* with having been indifferent concerning his transgressions. Paul proceeds still further, v. 6; he calls those who had reprehended the transgressor, *the majority*, who had condemned his vice and been grieved by it."

Once more, the apostle does not himself restore the transgressor, now penitent for his sin; *but exhorts the Corinthians to do it.* But if the church had themselves the authority

[4] Mosheim, Institutiones Majores, P. II. c. 3. § 14.

to receive him again to their communion, had they not also the right of censure? "The punishment which they had extended over him, by excluding him from their communion, is declared to be sufficient, since he had reformed himself, (on ἱκανόν, see Winer, p. 297). The apostle himself, therefore, proposes, v. 7, that they should again treat him in a friendly manner, and comfort him, in order that he might not be worn away by over-much grief."[5] In v. 10, again, he signifies his readiness to assent to their decisions; whom they forgive, he forgives also, and because *they* had forgiven him.

(*b*) *This sentence was an actual excommunication;* not a judicial visitation analogous to that upon Simon Magus, Acts 13: 11. By this sentence he was removed from the church of Christ, and reduced to his former condition as a heathen man. This, according to the most approved commentators, is the full meaning of the phrase, παραδοῦναι τῷ Σατανᾷ. The world, in the angelology of the Jews, and agreeably to the Scriptures, comprises two great divisions; the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan. By this sentence of excommunication, the incestuous person is transferred from the visible kingdom of our Lord, to the dominion of Satan, and in this sense delivered unto him.

(*c*) *The ultimate object of this discipline was the reformation of the offender;* the destruction of the flesh, that *the spirit may be saved* in the day of the Lord Jesus. It was not a *penance*, an arbitrary, prelatical infliction of pains and penalties, but a disciplinary process for the spiritual benefit of the individual.

(*d*) *It is questionable, perhaps, whether the sentence was accompanied with the judicial infliction of any disease whatever.* Many of the most respectable commentators understand, by the delivering "to Satan, for *the destruction of the flesh,*" the visitation of some wasting malady. The phrase-

[5] Bilroth, Comment. ad locum.

ology doubtless admits of such a construction, and the language of the apostle on other occasions seems to favor it. *Com.* 1 Cor. 11: 30. 1 Tim. 1: 20. But the consequences of this excommunication were of themselves sufficient, it may be, to justify this strong expression, *the destruction of the flesh.* To the Jews, under the old dispensation, and to primitive Christians under the new, the sentence of excommunication was no light matter. It was a withering curse. It was a *civil death.* It involved a total exclusion from kindred, from society, from all those charities of life, which Christians were wont to reciprocate even with the heathen.[6] This construction, again, is given to the passage by commentators of high authority.

But is any *bodily disease* intended? Flesh, σάρξ, often denotes *the carnal propensities*, the *sinful appetites* and *passions.* Gal. 5: 17, 19. 6: 8. Eph. 2: 3. Col. 2: 11. The subjugation, the putting away of these, is distinctly implied in the ultimate design of this discipline,—the salvation of the spirit,—and is not this all that is intended in the ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, *the destruction* of the flesh? However that may be, it is not essential to our present purpose. Whatever may have been, to the guilty person, the consequences of the sentence of excommunication, that sentence proceeded from the church acting at the suggestion and with the advice of the apostle.

An excommunication somewhat similar is described briefly in 1 Cor. 16: 22,—"If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maran-atha." The word anath-

[6] Josephus relates, that those who were excommunicated from the Essenes often died after a miserable manner, and were therefore, from [illegible]es of compassion, received again when at the point of death. [illegible] instance, the oath of the Essenes obliged them to refuse such [illegible] the excommunicated person might find; but was not the case [illegible] bad, when all were bound, not only to refuse him subsistence, [illegible]y expression of kindness and charity? Comp. Jahn's Ar-[illegible], § 528. Horne's Introduction, B. II. c. 3. § 4. Neander, [illegible]esch. 1. 373, 2d edit.

ema corresponds to the Hebrew חֵרֶם, which denotes either anything given up to God, or devoted to destruction. It was a form of excommunication familiar to the Jews, which was pronounced publicly upon the offender, and excluded him from all communion whatever with his countrymen.[7] Such was the *anathema*, a solemn sentence of excommunication, publicly pronounced upon the transgressor. The phrase, *Maran-atha*, is the Syro-Chaldaic מָרָנָא אֲתָה, *The Lord cometh*, i. e. *to judgment*. The whole, taken together, implies that the transgressor is separated from the communion of the church, and abandoned to the just judgment of God. All that the apostle seems to demand of the Corinthians respecting the offender is, that they should exclude him from their society, so that he might cease to be a member of the church, verses 12, 13. He pronounces no further judgment upon him, but expressly refers to the future judgment of God.

In review, therefore, of these important passages, several things are worthy of particular remark.

(α) The sentence of exclusion proceeded not from the pastor of the church, but *from the church collectively*.

(β) The excommunication is styled a punishment, ἐπιτιμία. But the apostle distinguishes it both from the civil penalties which attended the ban of excommunication among the Jews, and from the judicial sentence of God; regarding the whole transaction as a ecclesiastical act, intended to express just abhorrence of the crime and merited censure of it.

(γ) The reason assigned for the restoration of the offender was repentance,—λύπη,—*sorrow for his sin*, to which the apostle probably refers in a subsequent passage, 7: 10, when he says, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of."

[7] Jahn's Archäology, § 258. Du Pin, De Antiqua Disciplina, Diss. 3. c. 2. p. 272.

(δ) He was restored to the communion and fellowship of the church, as he had been excluded, *by the public consent*, the vote of that body. In accordance with these views, the apostle exhorts the Corinthians to separate from them any other immoral person, whether he be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner. 1 Cor. 5: 11. And the Galatians he exhorts to restore, in the spirit of meekness, one who may have been overtaken in fault. Now this right of judging and acting, both in the expulsion of the immoral and the restoration of the penitent, obviously vests in those who hold it, the power of ecclesiastical censure.[8] Comp. 2 Thess. 3: 14, and Rom. 16: 17.

It was, therefore, the privilege of the apostolical church to administer its own discipline by a free and public decision in its own body, a right which accords with every just principle of religious liberty, while it clearly illustrates the popular character of the primitive constitution of the church. For, as in their elections, so in their discipline, the apostolical churches were doubtless in harmony one with another, and may justly be presumed to have observed the same rules of fellowship. Based on the same principles, and governed by similar laws, one example may suffice to illustrate the policy of all.[9]

2. Argument from the early fathers.

Few passages, comparatively, occur in their writings relating immediately to the point under consideration. But enough can be derived from them to show that the church

[8] Rights of the Church, by Tindal, p. 39.

[9] On this whole subject, comp. Vitringa, De Synagoga, Lib. 3. p. 1. c. 10. Pertsch, Kirch. Hist. I. 4to. S. 469 seq. Recht. Eccles. Kirchenbanns, Vorrede, Ausgab, 1738, 4. C. M. Pfaff, De Originibus Juris Eccl. pp. 10—13. Neander's Allgem. Gesch. S. 349 seq. 71, 98, etc.

continued, for two or three centuries, to regulate her own discipline by the will of the majority, as expressed either by a direct popular vote, or through a representative delegation chosen by the people.

Clemens Romanus, the only apostolical father belonging strictly to the first century, and contemporary with several of the apostles, throughout his epistle treats the church of Corinth as the only court of censure. He addresses his epistle, A. D. 68 or 98, not to the bishop, but to the entire body of believers. This circumstance is worthy of particular notice, inasmuch as the epistle is written in relation to a case of discipline, and not to enforce the practical duties of religion. The church at Corinth was recognized as having authority in the case under consideration. The epistle of Polycarp, also, treating of the same general subject, is addressed to the church at Philippi, recognizing in the same manner the right of the church to take cognizance of offences.

Clement, in his epistle, reflects severely upon the Corinthians for their treatment of their religious teachers, some of whom they had rejected from the ministry. To do this without good reason, he assures them "would be no small sin" in them,[10] and earnestly exhorts them to exercise a charitable, orderly, and submissive spirit. But he offers no hint, that they had exceeded the limits of their legitimate authority, even in deposing some from the ministry; on the contrary, he recognizes the right of the church to regulate, at their discretion, their own discipline, and the duty of all to acquiesce in it. "Who among you is generous? who is compassionate? who has any charity? Let him say whether this sedition, this contention, and these schisms be on my account. I am ready to depart,—to go whithersoever you please, and *to do whatsoever ye shall command me*, only let

[10] Chauncey's Episcopacy, pp. 77, 78.

the flock of Christ be in peace with the ministers that are set over them."[11]

The above passage is twice quoted by Chancellor King, of the Episcopal church, in proof that the laity were members of the ecclesiastical court for the trial of offences, "and judges therein."[12] And Riddle, of the same communion, concurs with him in opinion. "Clement," says this author, "recommends those on whose account the dissensions had arisen, to retire and to submit to the will of the majority."[13] These censures to which Clement urges them to submit, he characterizes as "*the commands of the multitude, τὰ προστασσόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ πλήθους.*"

The epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians, written, according to bishop Wake, A. D. 116 or 117, affords us, indirectly, a similar example of the deportment of the church towards a fallen brother. This venerable father was greatly afflicted at the defection of Valens, a presbyter of that church, who had fallen into some scandalous error. But he entreats the charitable consideration of the church towards the offender, urging them to exercise moderation towards him; and on similar occasions to seek to reclaim the erring, and to call them back, in the spirit of kindness and Christian charity.[14] The address and exhortation, throughout, proceed on the supposition, that the duty of mutual watchfulness belongs to the brethren of the church collectively. It is not, however, a clear case of church discipline, though this may be implied.

Next in succession is Tertullian. He has given, in his Apology for the Christians, an account of the constitution of their society or church, together with the nature and circumstances of its religious worship and discipline. The

[11] *Εἰ δὲ ἐμὲ στάσις καὶ ἔρις καὶ σχίσματα ἐκχωρῶ, ἄπειμι, οὗ ἐὰν βούλησθε, καὶ ποιῶ τὰ προστασσόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ πλήθους.*—Ep. ad Cor. c. 54· Comp. § 44.

[12] Primitive Church, B. I. c. 11. § 6, 7. § 2.

[13] Christian Antiquities, p. 9.

[14] Comp. Ep. c. 11.

passage in question is, in several respects, one of the most important extant in the writings of the early fathers. Let us, however, confine our attention at present to that part of it which relates to their mode of administering ecclesiastical censure. This Apology was written, probably, about A. D. 198 or 199, or, at the latest, in 205. "We, Christians," says Tertullian, "are one body by our agreement in religion, and our unity of discipline, and bonds of hope, *spei foedere*, being animated with one and the same hope." He then proceeds to describe their public worship as consisting in prayer and the reading of the Scriptures, and then adds, "Surely from the sacred oracles we strengthen our faith, we encourage our hope, we establish our trust [in God], and, by the divine precepts, press the duties of religion. Here, also, we exhort and reprove, and *pass the divine censure*,—[the sentence of excommunication]. For, the judgment is given with great solemnity, and as in the presence of God. And it is regarded as the most impressive emblem of the final judgment, when one has so sinned as to be banished from the prayers, the assemblies, and the holy communion of the church."[15]

We are a society, *corpus sumus;* we are an associated body, in which seems, of necessity, to be implied the idea of a voluntary, deliberative and popular assembly;—and the tenor of the entire passage, viewed in its connection, forcibly impresses us with the conviction, that the "divine censure" was inflicted by the united decision of that body.

[15] Corpus sumus de conscientia religionis et disciplinae unitate et spei foedere. Certe fidem, sanctis vocibus pascimus, spem erigimus, fiduciam figimus, disciplinam praeceptorum nihilominus inculcationibus, densamus; ibidem etiam exhortationes, castigationes, et *censura divina*. Nam et judicatur magno cum pondere, ut apud certos de Dei conspectu; summumque futuri judicii praejudicium est, si quis ita deliquerit ut, a communicatione orationis et conventus et omnis sancti commercii relegetur.—*Apol.* 39. Comp. § 62, also J. H. Böhmer, Diss. 3. p. 151.

Certain approved elders, *probati quique seniores*, presided; but nothing is said to indicate that they even *pronounced* the sentence, as the officers of the church. How extraordinary the omission, then, if these elders had already, within the space of one hundred and fifty years, usurped the prerogatives, and assumed the rights, which by divine authority were originally accorded to the church,—of regulating her own discipline by her public deliberative assembly? Chancellor King,[16] and even the "great Du Pin,"[17] though himself a Roman Catholic, both cite the above passage, as evidence that the discipline of the church continued to be administered, as from the beginning it had been, *by public vote of the church;* the clergy being understood to have a joint action and influence in their deliberations.

On another occasion, Tertullian remarks, that the crimes of idolatry and of murder are of such enormity, that the charity of the *churches* is not extended to such as have been guilty of these offences.[18]

We come next to Cyprian, who was contemporary with Tertullian, and died about forty years later. In considering the authority of Cyprian, let the reader bear in mind the following remarks of Riddle relative to this celebrated father. "In these writings of Cyprian, as well as in all his works, we are especially delighted with the sincere and primitive piety of the author; while the chief subject of our regret and disapprobation are his mistaken views concerning the constitution of the church, and, especially, his assertion of undue power and prerogative on behalf of christian ministers;—of such influence and authority as the apostles never sanctioned, and such as no pastors who have thoroughly imbibed the apostolic spirit would wish to exercise or to possess. But notwithstanding this "undue power and pre-

[16] Christ. P. I. c. VII. § 4.
[17] Du Pin's Antiqua Disciplina, Diss. 3. c. 1.
[18] idololatriae, neque sanguini pax ab ecclesiis redditur—Lib. 2. c. 12. [19] Christian Antiquities, p. 99.

rogative" which Cyprian ascribes to christian ministers, he uniformly recognizes, and most fully asserts, the right of the church to direct in the discipline of its members. About the year 250, the emperor Decius issued an edict commanding the Christians to sacrifice to the gods. To escape the requisitions and penalties of this edict, Cyprian, then bishop of Carthage, was compelled to fly for his life, and continued in exile about sixteen months. But many of his church, under the relentless persecution that ensued, yielded an apparent compliance with the emperor's impious command. Others, without compliance, had the address to obtain a certain certificate from the prosecuting officer, which freed them from further molestation. All such persons, however, were denominated the lapsed, *lapsi*, and were excommunicated as apostates. The system of canonical penance, as it was called, was so far established at this time, that this class of offenders were required to fulfil the forms of a prescribed and prolonged penance before they could be restored to the communion of the church. Many of the lapsed, however, touched with a sense of their guilt, pleaded for an abatement of the rigor of these austerities, and an earlier and easier return to the communion of the church. To this course a party in the church, were, for various reasons, strongly inclined; and some were actually restored in the absence of the bishop. This irregularity was severely censured by Cyprian, who, however, in his epistles and writings relative to the case of the lapsed, often recognizes the right of the people to be a party in the deliberations and decisions respecting them. The clergy who had favored this abuse, he says, "shall give an account of what they have done, to me, to the confessors,[20] and *to the whole church.*"[21]

[20] "It was the privilege of the *confessors*, that is, of persons who had suffered torture, or received sentence of death, to give to any of the lapsed a written paper, termed *a letter of peace;* and the bearer was entitled to a remission of some part of the ecclesiastical discipline."—*Burton's History of the Church*, Chap. 15.

[21] Acturi et apud nos et apud confessores ipsos et *apud plebem*

Again he says, in a letter addressed to the church, "When the Lord shall have restored peace unto us all, and we shall all have returned to the church again, we shall then examine all these things, *you also being present and judging of them.*" In the conclusion of the same epistle he adds, "I desire then that they would patiently hear our counsel and wait for our return, that then, when many of us, bishops, shall have met together, we may examine the certificates and desires of the blessed martyrs, according to the discipline of the Lord, in the presence of the confessors, and *according to your will.*"[22]

Again, in his epistle to his people at Carthage, in which he laments the schism of Felicissimus, he assures them that on his return, he with his colleagues will dispose of the case *agreeably to the will of his people*, and the mutual council of both clergy and people.[23] The two offended sub-deacons and acolyths, he declares, shall be tried, not only in the presence of his colleagues, but *before the whole people.*[24] The above and other similar passages are often cited in evidence of the agency which the people still continued, in the middle of the third century, to exert in the administration of ecclesiastical censure.[25] Will any one presume to say, that in re-

universam causam suam, cum Domino permittente, in sinum matris ecclesiæ recolligi cœperimus.—*Ep.* 10. al. 9.

[22] Cum, pace nobis omnibus a Domino prius data, ad ecclesiam regressi cœperimus, tunc examinabuntur singula, *præsentibus et judicantibus vobis.* – Audiant quæso, patienter consilium nostrum, exspectent regressionem nostram; ut cum ad vos, per Dei misericordiam venerimus, conveniat episcop. plures secundum Dominæ disciplinam, et confessorum præsentiam et vestrum quoque sententiam martyrum libros et desideria examinare possimus.—*Ep.* 12 al 11.

[23] Cum collegis meis, quibus præsentibus, secundum arbitrium [illegible] et cum ut. nostrum communi consilium, sicut semel placuit ea quæ agenda sunt, disponere.—*Ep.* 40.

[24] Nec iterum cum collegis meis, ad cum. nobis quæ universa.—*Ep.* 36. Omnium judicio a nobis et meo cognoscentur.—*Ep.* 44.

[25] Bingham's Antiq. Eccles. Eccl. Ant. b. 2. c. 5. § pp. 332—336.

fusing to decide upon any case, or to exercise any authority, Clement only condescends kindly to regard the will of the people, without acknowledging their right to be consulted? We ask in reply, Is this the language and spirit of prelacy? Could a modern diocesan so speak, and perform all his duties with such scrupulous regard to the will of his people, without exciting in their minds the idea of that religious liberty, which, from the beginning, the church was accustomed to enjoy, and which it was so much encouraged to exercise? Under such instructions as those of Clement, it could have learned but slowly the doctrine of passive obedience.

Enough has been said to illustrate, at least, the usage of the church at Carthage. Between this church and that at Rome, under Cornelius, there was, at this time, the greatest harmony of sentiment in relation to the discipline of the church. And, from the correspondence between the churches, which is recorded in the works of Cyprian, there is conclusive evidence that their polity was the same. This is so clearly asserted by Du Pin, that I shall dismiss this point after citing his authority. After making the extract from Tertullian, which has been given above, and others from Cyprian, similar to those which have already been cited, he adds, "From whence it is plain, that both in Rome and at Carthage, no one could be expelled from the church, or restored again, except with the consent of the people." This, according to the same author, was in conformity with apostolical precedent in the case of the incestuous person at Corinth.[26]

Origen, again, of Caesarea in Palestine, speaks of the conviction of an offender before the whole church, *ἐπὶ πασῆς τῆς ἐκκλησίας*, as the customary mode of trial.[27] With

[26] De Antiqua Disciplina, Diss. 3. pp. 248, 249.

[27] *Πρὸς δὲ τὸ δοκοῦν σκληρὸν πρὸς τοὺς τὰ ἐλάττονα ἡμαρτηκότας, εἴποι τις ἄν ὅτι οὐκ ἔξεστι δίς ἐξῆς μὴ ἀκούσαντα, τὸ τρίτον ἀκούσαι ὡς διὰ τοῦτο μηκέτι εἶναι ὡς ἐθνικὸν καὶ τελώνην, ἢ μηκέτι δεηθῆναι*

the authority of Origen we may join that of Chrysostom at Constantinople. In commenting upon 1 Cor. 5: 3—5, he represents the complaint of the apostle to be that the Corinthians had not put away that wicked person from among them; "showing that this ought to be done *without their teacher*,"[28] and that the apostle associates them with himself, "that his own authority might not seem to be too great" in the transaction. Theodoret also expresses much the same sentiments upon the passage under consideration.[29]

These authorities are derived both from the Eastern and the Western church. As ancient expositions of the apostolical rule, and as examples of the usage of the churches in the ages immediately succeeding that of the apostles, they indicate that throughout this period ecclesiastical discipline was administered in accordance with the will of the people, and by their decision. The bishop and clergy, instead of holding in their own grasp the keys of the kingdom of heaven, co-operated with the church in its deliberations; and acted as the official organ of the assembly in executing its decisions. Neither was the ban of the church wielded in terror, as it has often been by an arbitrary priesthood to accomplish their own sinister ends.

The penitent was restored, also, in the spirit of kindness and christian forgiveness, by the joint consent of the same body which had originally excluded him from its communion.

This point deserves distinct consideration, as another in-

τοῦ ἐπὶ πάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας.—*Comment. in Matt.*, Tom. 13. p. 612. Com. p. 613.

[28] Δεικνὺς ὅτι δὲ χωρὶς τοῦ διδασκάλου τὸ γενέσθαι ἔδει ἵνα μὴ δόξῃ πολλὴ εἶτ ἡ αὐθεντία.

Hom. 15. *ad* 1 *Cor.*, Tom. 10. p. 126.

[29] Theodoret, Comment. ad locum, Opera, Tom. 3. p. 141. Comp. Blondell, De jure plebis in regimine ecclesiastico, where many other authorities are given.

dication of the religious liberty enjoyed by the church. Paul submitted to the church at Corinth the restoration of the offender whom they had excluded from their communion. Tertullian makes it the duty of the penitent to cast himself at the feet of the clergy, and kneeling at the altar of God, to *seek the pardon and intercessions of all the brethren.*[30] Cyprian in the passage cited above, declares, that the lapsed who had been excluded from the church, must make their defence before all the people, *apud plebem universam.* "It was ordained by an African synod, in the third century, that, except in danger of death, or of a sudden persecution, none should be received unto the peace of the church, *without the knowledge and consent of the people.*"[31] Natalis, at Rome, in the first part of the third century, threw himself at the feet of the clergy and *laity*, and so bewailed his faults, that *the church was moved with compassion for him*, and with much difficulty he was received into its communion.[32] The same is related of one of the bishops, who was restored to the church at Rome, under Cornelius, to lay communion, "*through the mediation of all the people then present.*"[33] Serapion, at Antioch, was also refused admission to that church, no one *giving attention to him.*[34] At Rome, then, in Africa, in Asia, and universally, the penitent was restored to Christian communion, by the authority of the church from which he had been expelled.

If it were necessary to adduce further evidence in vindication of the right of the people to administer the discipline of the church, it might be drawn from the acknowledged fact, that the people, down to the third or fourth century,

[30] Presbyteris advolvi, et caris Dei adgeniculari omnibus fratribus legationes deprecationis suae injungere.—*De Poenitentia*, c. 9.

[31] Cyprian, Epist. 59. The same fact is also asserted by Du Pin, in the passage quoted above.

[32] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 5. c. 28.

[33] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 6. c. 43.

[34] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 6. c. 44.

retained, and not unfrequently exercised, the right even of deposing from the ministry. The controversy of the people of Corinth with their pastors, as indicated in the epistle of Clement, has been already mentioned; and the case of Valens deposed from the ministry by the church at Philippi. To these may be added the instances of Martialis and Basilides, bishops of Leon and Astorga in Spain, who were deposed by their people for idolatry. From this sentence of the people they appealed to several bishops in Africa. These, after hearing the case in common council, A. D. 258, affirmed the act of the people. The result of their deliberations was communicated by Cyprian, from which decision the extract below is taken, in which he fully accords to the people the right both to choose the worthy and depose the unworthy: *eligendi dignos sacerdotes et indignos recusandi.* "Many other such like passages," says King, "are found in that Synodical Epistle, which flatly asserts the people's power to depose a wicked and scandalous bishop,"[35] and with him Bingham substantially agrees.[36] And again, by Dr. Barrow, of the Episcopal church: "In reason, the nature of any spiritual office consisting in instruction in truth, and guidance in virtue toward the attainment of salvation, if any man doth lead into pernicious error or impiety, he thereby ceaseth to be capable of such office; as a blind man, by being so, doth cease to be a guide. No man can be bound to follow any one into the ditch, or to obey any one in prejudice

[35] Prim. Chris. P. 1. c. 6. The following passage is an example of such an assertion. Inde per temporum et successionum vices episcoporum ordinatio et ecclesiae ratio decurrit ut *ecclesia super episcopos constituater* et omnis actus ecclesiae per eosdem praepositos gubernetur. Cum hoc itaque *lege divina* fundatum sit, miror quosdam, audaci temeritate, sic mihi scribere voluisse ut ecclesiae nomine literas facerent, quando ecclesia in episcopo et clero et in omnibus stantibus [*i. e.* who had apostatized] sit constituta.—*Ep.* 33. al. 27.

[36] Book 16. c. 1. Comp. Neander, Allgem. Kirch. Gesch. 11. S. 341.

to his own salvation. If any pastor should teach bad doctrine, or prescribe bad practice, his people may reject and disobey him."[37]

From these censures of a popular assembly an appeal would be made, as in the case before us, to a synodical council, or to the neighboring bishops. For this reason, they are sometimes represented as the ecclesiastical court for the trial of the clergy. Such they were at a subsequent period; but in the primitive church it was, as appears from the foregoing authorities, the right of the church to exercise her discipline over both laity and clergy. The greater includes the less. The right to depose a scandalous bishop, of necessity supposes the right to expel from their communion an unworthy member of humbler rank. The conclusion is irresistible, that, as in the highest act of ecclesiastical censure, so in smaller offences, the discipline of the church was conducted with the strictest regard to the rights and privileges of its members.

3. Argument from the authority of modern ecclesiastical writers.

Authority is not argument. But the opinion of those who have made ecclesiastical history the study of their lives, is worthy of our regard. The concurring opinion of many such becomes a valid reason for our belief. What then is their authority?

Valesius, the learned commentator on Eusebius, says that "the people's suffrages were required when any one was to be received into the church, who for any fault had been excommunicated."[38] This is said in relation to the usage of the church in the third century.

The authority of Du Pin, the distinguished historian of

[37] Barrow's Works, Vol. I. p. 744. Comp. also, Pertsch, Kirch. Hist. I. S. 370. Mosheim, Can. Recht, p. 60.

[38] Eccl. Hist. Lib. 6. 44. Com. Lib. 5. 28.

the Roman Catholic communion, whose opinion upon this point is worthy of all confidence, is to the same effect; that the discipline of the church continued, in the third century, to be administered by the church as it had been from the beginning.[39]

Simonis, profoundly learned on all points relating to ecclesiastical usage, says that, "this church discipline was so administered that not only the clergy, especially the bishops, and in important cases a council of them, but also the *church, in every case*, gave their decision and approbation, in order that nothing might be done through prejudice and private interest by being submitted to the clergy and bishops alone."[40]

Baumgarten ascribes to the church alone the entire control of ecclesiastical censures, from the earliest periods of its history down to the time of Cyprian, when he supposes each case to have been first adjudicated by the church, and afterwards by the clergy and bishop.[41]

Mosheim is full and explicit upon the same point. He not only ascribes to the church the power of enacting their own laws and choosing their own officers, but of excluding and receiving such as were the subjects of discipline, *malos et degeneros et excludendi et recipiendi*, and adds that nothing of any moment was transacted or decided without their knowledge and consent.[42]

Planck asserts that, so late as the middle of the third century, the members of the church still exercised their original right of controlling the proceedings of the church, both in the exclusion of offenders, and in the restitution of penitents.[43]

[39] Antiqua Disciplina, Diss. 3. c. 1.

[40] Vorlesungen über Christ. Alterthum. S. 426.

[41] Erläuterungen, Christ. Alterthum. § 122. Comp. also § 36, and S. 85.

[42] De Rebus Christ., Saec. Prim. § 45.

[43] Gesell. Verfass. 1. S. 180, 508. Comp. S. 129—140, and Fuchs, Bibliothek, 1. S. 43 seq.

Guerike also states, that, in the third century, the duty of excluding from the church and of restoring to her communion, still devolved upon the laity.[44]

The views of Neander are sufficiently apparent from quotations which have already been made in the progress of this work. More thoroughly conversant with the writings of the fathers, and more profoundly skilled in the government and history of the church than any other man living, he not only ascribes the discipline of offenders originally to the deliberation and action of the church, but states, moreover, that the right of controlling this discipline was retained by the laity in the middle of the third century, after the rise of the Episcopal power, and the consequent change in the government of the church. "The participation of the laity in the concerns of the church was not yet altogether excluded. One of these concerns was the restoration of the lapsed to the communion of the church. The examination which was instituted in connection with this restoration was also held before the whole church."[45]

These authorities might be extended almost indefinitely; but enough have been cited to show that, in the opinion of those who are most competent to decide, the sacred right of directing the discipline of the church was, from the beginning, exercised by the whole body of believers belonging to the community; and that they continued, in the third century, to exercise the same prerogative.

4. Argument from the fact, that the entire government of the church was under the control of its members.

Government by the people, characterized the whole ecclesiastical polity of the primitive church. The members of the church, unitedly, enacted their own laws, elected their own officers, established their own judicature, and managed

[44] Kirch. Gesch. S. 94, 100, 101, 2d edit.
[45] Allgem. Kirch. Gesch. 1. S. 342, 2d edit.

all their affairs by their mutual suffrages. "With them resided the power of enacting laws, as also of adopting or rejecting whatever might be proposed in the general assemblies, and of expelling and again receiving into communion any depraved or unworthy members. In a word, nothing whatever, of any moment, could be determined on, or carried into effect, without their knowledge and concurrence."[46]

On this point, again, we must be permitted to adduce the authority of Neander. After showing at length, that, agreeably to the spirit of the primitive church, all were regarded as different organs and members of one body, and actuated by one and the same spirit, he adds: "But from the nature of the religious life and of the Christian church, it is hardly possible to draw the inference naturally that the government should have been entrusted to the hands of a single individual. *The monarchical form of government accords not with the spirit of the Christian church.*"[47]

Riddle gives the following sketch of the constitution and government of the church as it existed at the close of the first and at the beginning of the second century. "The subordinate government, etc., of each particular church was vested in itself; that is to say, the whole body elected its minister and officers, and was consulted concerning all matters of importance."[48]

Even the "judicious" Hooker, the great expounder of the ecclesiastical polity of the Episcopal church, distinctly declares, that, "the general consent of all" is requisite for the ratification of the laws of the church. "Laws could they never be, without the consent of the whole church to be guided by them; whereunto both nature, and the practice of the church of God set down in the Scripture, is found so consonant, that God himself would not impose his own laws upon

[46] Mosheim, De Rebus Christ., Saec. 1. § 45.
[47] Allgem. Gesch. 1. S. 312. 2d edit. [48] Chronology, p. 13.

his people by the hands of Moses without their free and open consent."[49]

From all this, in connection with what has already been said in the former part of this work, the popular administration of the government is sufficiently manifest. Even the minute concerns of the church were submitted to the direction of the popular voice. Is a delegate to be sent out? He goes, not as the servant of the bishop, but as the representative of the church, chosen to this service by public vote.[50] Is a letter missive to be issued from one church to another? It is done in the name of the church; and, when received, is publicly read.[51] In short, nothing is done without the consent of the church. Even Cyprian, the great advocate for Episcopal authority in the middle of the third century, protests to his clergy, that, "from his first coming to his bishopric, he had ever resolved to do nothing according to his own private will, without the advice of the clergy and the approbation of the people."[52]

The point now under consideration is very clearly presented by an old English writer, of Cambridge in England, whose work on Primitive Episcopacy evinces such a familiar acquaintance with the early history of the church as entitles his conclusions to great respect. "In the apostles' times, and divers ages after, all the people, under the inspection of

[49] Ecclesiastical Polity, B. VIII. [50] Ignatius, ad. Phil. c. 10.

[51] The letters of Clement and Polycarp were written by the authority of the respective churches. Comp. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 4. c. 15. 5. c. 1, and c. 24. With the epistle of Clement, five delegates were sent also from the church at Rome, to that at Corinth, to attempt to reconcile the dissensions in the latter church. § 59.

[52] Ad id vero quod scripserunt mihi compresbyteri nostri, Donatus et Fortunatus, Novatus et Gordius, solus rescribere nihil potui; quando a primordio episcopatus mei statuerim nihil sine consilio vestro, et sine consensu plebis meae privatim sententia gerere; sed cum ad vos per Dei gratiam venero, tunc de eis quae vel gesta sunt, vel gerenda sicut honor mutuus poscit in commune tractabimus.—*Cyprian, Ep.* 5. Comp. Ep. 3. 55. *Daillé on the Fathers*, p. 330. London.

one bishop, were wont to meet together, not only for worship, but for other administrations. All public acts passed at assemblies of the whole people. They were consulted with, their concurrence was thought necessary, and their presence required, that nothing might pass without their cognizance, satisfaction and consent. This was observed, not only in elections of officers, but in ordinations and censures, in admission of members and reconciling penitents, and in debates and consultations about other emergencies. There is such evidence of this, particularly in Cyprian, almost in every one of his epistles, that it is acknowledged by modern writers of all sorts, such as are most learned and best acquainted with antiquity."[53]

If then the sanction of the church was sought in the minutest matters, surely transactions of such solemnity as those of expelling the guilty, and of restoring the penitent must have been submitted to their direction. Was a christian salutation to a sister church communicated by public authority, commending, it may be, a faithful brother to communion and fellowship, and had they no voice in rejecting a fallen and reprobate member from their own communion? Was the sanction of the whole body requisite before one from another church could be received to their communion, and had they no voice in restoring the penitent who returned confessing his sins and entreating the enjoyment of the same privileges?

All this fully accords with the usage of the apostolical churches, and is evidently a continuation of the same policy. Whether deacons are to be appointed, or an apostle or presbyters chosen, it is done by vote of the church. A case for discipline occurs; it is submitted to the church. A dissension arises, Acts 15; this also is referred to the church.

[53] Clarkson's Primitive Episcopacy, pp. 171, 172. The authority of the Magdeburg Centuriators is also to the same effect. Comp. Chap. 7. Cent. II. and III.

The decision is made up as seemeth good *to the whole church.* The result is communicated by the apostles, the elders, and the brethren jointly. The brethren of the church have a part in all ecclesiastical concerns; nothing is transacted without their approbation and consent. The sovereign power is vested in the people. They are constituted by the apostles themselves the guardians of the church, holding in their hands the keys of the kingdom, to open and to shut, to bind and to loose at their discretion. So the apostles and primitive fathers evidently understood and administered the government of the church. Neither Peter, nor any apostle, nor bishop, nor presbyter, but each and every disciple of Christ, is the rock on which he would build his church. Such is Origen's interpretation of the passage in Matt. 16: 18. "Every disciple of Christ is that rock, and upon all such the whole doctrine of the church, and of its corresponding polity is built. If you suppose it to be built upon Peter alone, what say you of John, that son of thunder; and of each of the apostles? Will you presume to say, that the gates of hell will prevail against the other apostles, and against all the saints, but not against Peter? Rather is not this, and that other declaration, 'On this rock I will build my church,' applicable to each and every one alike?"[54]

Such are the arguments which we offer in defence of the proposition, that any body of believers, associated together for the enjoyment of religious rights and privileges, was also originally an ecclesiastical court, for the trial of offences.[55] This is asserted by the great Du Pin, of the Roman Catholic church. It is admitted by respectable authorities, King, Cave, Riddle, etc., of the Episcopal church. It is generally

[54] Comment. in Matt. Tom. 3. p. 524.

[55] It was a doctrine of Tertullian, that where three are assembled together in the name of Christ, there they constitute a church, though only belonging to the laity. Three were sufficient for this purpose. Ubi tres, ecclesia est, licet laici.—*Exhort. ad Castitat.* c. 7. 522. *De Fuga*, c. 14.

acknowledged by Protestants of other religious denominations. It is implied or asserted in various passages from the early fathers. They speak of it, not as a controverted point, but as an admitted principle. The sanction of the members of the primitive church was sought in all the less important concerns of the church. They controlled also, the highest acts of ecclesiastical censure, and frequently exercised their right of deposing those of their own pastors and bishops who proved themselves unworthy of the sacred office. And, finally, the church was from the beginning authorized and instructed by the apostle Paul, to administer discipline to an offending member. With the approbation of the great apostle, they pronounced upon the transgressor the sentence of excommunication, and again, on receiving satisfactory evidence of penitence, restored him to their communion and fellowship.

With the question of expediency, in all this, we have now no concern. If any prefer the Episcopal system of church government to one more free and popular, we shall not here dispute their right to submit themselves to the control of the diocesan. But when they go on to assert that the exercise of such authority belongs to him by the divine right of Episcopacy, we rest assured that they have begun to teach for doctrine the commandments of men. From the beginning it was not so. "Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition."

MODE OF ADMISSION.

This was at first extremely simple; consisting only in the profession of faith in Christ, and baptism. The churches, however, at an early period, learned the necessity of exercising greater caution in receiving men into their communion. Taught by their own bitter experience, they began to require, in the candidate for admission to their communion, a compe-

tent acquaintance with religious truth, and a trial of his character for a considerable space of time. From undue laxness, they passed into the opposite extreme of excessive rigor, in prescribing rules and qualifications for communion. These austerities gave rise to the order of catechumens toward the close of the second century, and to a long train of formalities preliminary to a union with the church.

In immediate connection with these rites, and as a part of the same discipline, began the system of penance in the treatment of the *lapsed*—persons who had incurred the censure of the church. By this system, their return to the church was rendered even more difficult than had been their original entrance. The system was rapidly developed. In the course of the third century it was brought into full operation, while the people still retained much influence over the penal inflictions of the church upon transgressors.[56] But it is not our purpose to treat upon this subject. The system is detailed at length in the author's Antiquities of the Christian Church, Chap. XVII, to which the reader is referred for information in relation to the offences which were the subject of discipline, the penalties inflicted, and the manner of restoring penitents.

The entire regimen, however, passed, in process of time, from the hands of the people into those of the clergy, especially of the bishops. It was lost in the general extinction of the rights and privileges of the church, and the overthrow of its primitive apostolical constitution; upon the ruins of which was reared the Episcopal hierarchy, first in the form of an "ambitious oligarchy," as Riddle very justly denominates it, and then, of a tyrannical despotism.

II. Usurpation of discipline by the priesthood.

In the fourth century, the clergy by a discipline peculiar

[56] Planck, Gesellschafts-Verfass. 1. S. 129—140. Fuchs, Bibliothek, 1. S. 43, 44, 45—50, 403.

to themselves, and applicable only to persons belonging to their order, found means of relieving themselves from the penalties of the protracted penance which was exacted of those who fell under the censure of the church. Suspension and the lesser excommunication or degradation, and the like, were substituted as the penalties of the clergy, instead of the rigorous penance of the laity. And though in some respects it was claimed, that the discipline of the clergy was more severe than that of the laity, the practical effect of this discrimination, which was gradually introduced, was to separate the clergy from the laity, and to bring the latter more completely under the power of the priesthood.[57] It was at once the occasion of intolerance in the one, and of oppression to the other.

The confederation of the churches in synods and councils had also much influence in producing the same result. In these conventions, laws and regulations were enacted for the government and discipline of the churches of the province. And though the churches, severally, still retained the right of regulating their own polity, as circumstances might require, they seldom claimed the exercise of their prerogative. The result was, that the law-making power was transferred, in a great degree, from the people to the provincial synods, where again the authority of the people was lost in the overpowering influence of bishops and clergy. These claimed at first only to act as the representatives of their respective churches, by authority delegated to them by their constituents.[58] But they soon assumed a loftier tone.

[57] Planck, Gesellschafts-Verfass. 1. S. 342—346. Comp. c. 8. S. 125—141.

[58] Tertullian describes such assemblies as bodies *representative* of the whole Christian church. Ipsa repraesentatio totius nominis Christiani.— *De Jejun.* c. 13. p. 552.

In the infancy, indeed, of councils, the bishops did not scruple to acknowledge that they appeared there merely as the ministers or legates of their respective churches, and that they were, in fact, no-

Claiming for themselves the guidance of the Spirit of God, they professed to speak and act according to the teachings of this divine agent. Their decisions, therefore, instead of being the judgment of ignorant and erring men, were the dictates of unerring wisdom. And the people, in exchange for the government which they had been accustomed to exercise for themselves, were kindly provided with an administration which claimed to be directed by wisdom from above.[59] Taught thus and disciplined in that great lesson of bigotry and spiritual despotism,—*passive submission to persons ordained of God for the good of the church*,—they were prepared to resign their original rights and privileges into the hands of the hierarchy.

There is the fullest evidence that the action of the laity was requisite, as late as the middle of the third century, in all disciplinary proceedings of the church. By the beginning of the fourth, however, this cardinal right, through the operation of causes, which have been briefly mentioned and which may be more fully specified hereafter, was greatly abridged; and soon after, it was wholly lost. This fact strongly illustrates the progress of the Episcopal hierarchy. While the right of the laity was yet undisputed, the power of the bishop began at first to be partially asserted, and occasionally admitted; the people occupying a neutral position between submission and open hostility. But, from disuse to denial, and from denial to the extinction of neglected privi-

thing more than representatives acting from instructions; but it was not long before this humble language began, by little and little, to be exchanged for a loftier tone. They at length took upon themselves to assert that they were the legitimate successors of the apostles themselves, and might, consequently, of their own proper authority, dictate laws to the christian flock. To what extent the inconveniences and evils arising out of these preposterous pretensions reached in after times, is too well known to require any particular notice in this place.—*Mosheim, De Rebus Christ., Saec. II.* § 23.

[59] Planck, Gesellschafts-Verfass. 1. S. 448—452.

leges and powers, the descent is natural, short and rapid. From about the middle of the fourth century, accordingly, the bishops assumed the control of the whole penal jurisdiction of the laity, opening and shutting at pleasure the doors of the church, inflicting sentence of excommunication, and prescribing, at their discretion, the austerities of penance; and again absolving the penitents, and restoring them to the church by their own arbitrary power.[60] The people, accordingly, no longer having any part in the trial of offences, ceased to watch for the purity of the church, connived at offences, and concealed the offender, not caring to interfere with the prerogatives of the bishop, in which they had no further interest. The speedy and sad corruption of the church was but the natural consequence of this loose and arbitrary discipline. It was one efficient cause of that degeneracy which succeeded.

The ecclesiastical discipline, if such indeed it can be called, now appears in total contrast with that of the church under the apostles. Then, the supreme authority was vested in the people; now, it is with the clergy. The church then enacted her own laws, and administered her discipline; the pastor, as the executive officer, acting in accordance with her will for the promotion of her purity and of her general prosperity. The clergy are now the supreme rulers of the church, from whom all laws emanate; and are also the executioners of their own arbitrary enactments. The church is no longer a free and independent republic, extending to its constituents the rights and privileges of religious liberty; but a spiritual monarchy under the power of an ambitious hierarchy whose will is law, and whose mandates the people are taught to receive, as meting out to them, with wisdom from on high, the mercy and the justice, the goodness and severity of their righteous Lawgiver and Judge. The people are wholly dis-

[60] Planck, Gesellschafts-Verfass. 1. 509.

franchised by the priesthood, who have assumed the prerogatives of that prophetic Antichrist, who "as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

REMARKS.

1. It is the right and the duty of the members of every church, themselves to administer the discipline of their own body.

Each church is a voluntary association, formed for the mutual enjoyment of the privileges and ordinances of religion. To its members belongs the right to prescribe the conditions of a connection with their communion, or of exclusion from it, as may seem good to them, in conformity with the principles of the gospel. The right is vested in them collectively; and no man, or body of men, can lawfully usurp authority over them, or embarrass them in the free exercise of this right. Any such interference is an unjust infringement of their religious liberty.

The duty of carefully exercising a Christian watch and fellowship, one toward another, and of excluding those who walk unworthily, is most clearly enforced in the Scriptures; and however it may be disregarded in particular instances, it is generally acknowledged to be one important means of preserving the purity of the church, and of promoting the interests of religion.

2. Ecclesiastical censure is not a penal infliction, but a *moral discipline* for the reformation of the offender and the honor of religion.

This thought has been already presented, but it should be borne distinctly in mind. Church discipline seeks, in the kindness of Christian love, to recover a fallen brother, to aid him in his spiritual conflicts, and to save him from hopeless ruin. In its simplicity and moral efficacy, if not in principle,

the discipline of the apostolical and primitive churches differed totally from that complicated system of penance into which it degenerated under the hierarchy. The austerities of this system, with its pains and privations, have more the appearance of penal inflictions to deter others from sin, than of Christian efforts to reclaim the guilty; and the system itself was often, in the hands of the priesthood, an engine of torture, with which to molest an adversary or to gratify private resentment. But the Christian love that administers ecclesiastical censure, in the spirit of the apostolical rule, superior to all sinister motives, seeks only the reformation of the offender, and the honor of that sacred cause upon which he has brought reproach.[61]

3. This mode of discipline is the best safeguard against the introduction of bad men into the church.

The members of the church who are associated with the candidate in the relations and pursuits of private life, best know his character. They form the most unbiased judgment of his qualifications; and have less to pervert their decisions than any other men. Commit, therefore, the high trust of receiving men into the sacred relations of the church of Christ, neither to bishop, nor presbyter, nor pastor, but to the united, unbiased decision of the members of that communion.

4. Discipline administered by the brethren of the church, is the best means of securing the kind and candid trial of those who may be the subjects of ecclesiastical censure.

Cases of this kind are often involved in great difficulty, and always require to be treated with peculiar delicacy and impartiality. These ends of impartial justice the wisdom of the world seeks to secure by the *verdict of a jury*. The brethren of the church, in like manner, are the safest tribunal for the impeachment of those who walk unworthily. Commit to any other hands this high trust, and it is in danger

[61] Venema, Institutiones Hist: Eccles. III. § 188. p. 214 seq.

either of being totally neglected, or else perverted in its exercise by some private bias, or partizan spirit.

5. The mode of discipline now under consideration, relieves the pastor from unwelcome responsibilities, both in the admission of members and in the treatment of offences.

He has a delicate and responsible duty to perform towards those who present themselves for admission to the church. He is not satisfied, it may be, with regard to the qualifications of the candidate, and yet this is only an impression received from a great variety of considerations which cannot well be expressed. But to refuse the applicant, without assigning good and sufficient reasons, may expose him to the charge of uncharitableness, and involve him in great difficulty. Under this circumstance, no railing accusation can be brought against him, provided the case is submitted to the impartial decision of the church.

And again, in the treatment of offences, the pastor should always be able to take shelter under the authority of the church. Like Paul, in the case of the Corinthians, he may be obliged to rebuke them for their neglect, and to urge them to their duty. But he should never appear as the accuser and prosecutor of any of his people. The trial should begin and end with the church, who ought always to be ready to relieve their pastor from duties so difficult and delicate, which belong not to his sacred office.

6. Discipline so administered serves to promote the peace of the church.

An unruly member of the church often has the address to enlist a violent party in his behalf. In every communion may be found a certain number of hasty, restless spirits, who are ever ready to rally at the cry of bigotry, intolerance, persecution, however unjustly raised. The contention may rise high and rend the whole church asunder, if the minister alone becomes, in their fiery zeal, the object of attack. The only safe appeal is to the calm, deliberate decision of the

whole body of the church. Here the case is open for a full discussion and a fair decision, which, more than anything else, has power to silence the rage of faction, and to calm the tumults of party. It is in vain to contend against the sovereign power of the majority. The charge of acting from personal prejudice and private animosity lies not against them, as against a single individual. Thus a church may gather about their pastor for the defence of his character, for his encouragement in the faithful discharge of his duty, and for the preservation of their own peace, by silencing the clamors of any restless malcontents.

7. The only mode that has ever been devised for preserving the discipline of the church is to submit it to the control, not of the clergy, but of the members themselves.

In consequence of depriving the members of the church of a participation in its discipline, soon after the rise of Episcopacy, they became remiss in their attention to the scandals of their brethren, and withdrew their watch over each other.[62] And since that day, when was it ever known that any just discipline was maintained in any church under a national establishment and an independent priesthood? What is the discipline of the Episcopal church even in this country, where, without a state religion, or an independent priesthood, the laity have little or no concern with the admission of members to their communion, or the exclusion of them from it? Let the reader weigh well this consideration. It suggests one of our strongest and most important objections to the ecclesiastical polity of the Episcopal church.[63]

[62] Planck, Gesell. Verfass. 1. S. 509 seq.

[63] Some of the clergy of that communion, we understand, are accustomed to keep a private list of those who are wont to receive the sacred elements at their hands, and if any are found to walk unworthily, their names are silently stricken off from the roll, and their communion with the church is dropped in this informal manner. Such pastoral fidelity, duly exercised, is worthy of all consideration. But can it be expected, as a general rule, to accomplish the high ends of

Why do the malcontents of other denominations, men of equivocal character if not of tarnished reputation, take refuge in such numbers in that church? We wish to bring no unjust accusation against that denomination, but it seems to be admitted, by members of their own communion, that there is no discipline in the Episcopal church. "Every church warden in every parish in England is called upon once a year to attend the visitation of his archdeacon. At this time oaths are tendered to him respecting his different duties; and among other things he swears, that he will present to the archdeacon the names of all such inhabitants of his parish as are leading notoriously immoral lives. This oath is regularly taken once a year by every church warden in every parish in England; yet I believe that such a thing as any single presentation for notoriously immoral conduct has scarcely been heard of for a century."[64] Another of the Tractarians complains in the following terms of this total neglect of discipline in the Episcopal church. "I think the church has, in a measure, forgotten its own principles, as declared in the sixteenth century; nay, under stranger circumstances, as far as I know, than have attended any of the errors and corruptions of the Papists. Grievous as are their declensions from primitive usage, I never heard, in any case, of their practice directly contradicting their services; whereas, we go on lamenting, once a year, the absence of discipline in our church, yet do not even dream of taking any one step towards its restoration."[65]

A well known clergyman of our own country, in assigning his "Reasons for preferring Episcopacy," speaks of it as "universally felt and admitted" that "in no Christian de-

faithful Christian discipline? Is it the discipline of the New Testament? Or can it be expected of any class of men, that they will have the independence to be faithful here? A magnanimity how rare!

[64] Tracts for the Times, No. 59. p. 416. [65] Ibid. No. 41. p. 297.

nomination of the country is there so great a diversity of opinion [as in the Episcopal church] about doctrines, church polity, etc. But we hear," he adds, "of no discipline on account of this diversity. The probability is, that discipline on these accounts would rend and break up the church." And again he says: "There is no church in the world, that has in fact so great a diversity of opinion in her own bosom, as the Church of England, and not a little of downright infidelity. And yet no one can reasonably doubt, that if she continue to let discipline for opinion alone, etc. that most important branch of Protestantism will ere long be redeemed from her past and present disadvantages, and recover the primitive vitality of Christianity, so as to have it pervading and animating her whole communion. Nor is it less certain, that by attempting discipline for opinion, she would forever blight all these prospects."[66]

In the Lutheran church in Germany, christian discipline has fallen into equal neglect. So totally is it disregarded that according to the declaration of a devout minister of that church,[67] persons of abandoned character, known to be such, and the most notorious slaves of lust are publicly and indiscriminately received to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. What ecclesiastical hierarchy, or national establishment was ever known to maintain, for any long period, the purity of the church?

8. This mode of discipline gives spiritual life and power to the church.

The moral efficiency of any body of believers depends, not upon their number, but upon the purity of their lives, and their fidelity in duty. A church composed of men who are a living exemplification of the power of the Christian religion by their holy lives, and by the faithful discharge of their

[66] Thoughts on the Religious State of the Country; with Reasons for preferring Episcopacy. By Rev. Calvin Colton, pp. 199, 200.

[67] Liebetrut, Tag des Herrn, S. 331.

duties,—such a church, and such only, is what the Lord Jesus designed his church should be,—the pillar and ground of the truth. Now this being conceded, under what form of discipline do we find the purest church? Where do we discover the greatest circumspection in the admission of members? Where, the strictest watch and fellowship, the kindest efforts to recover the fallen, and the most faithful endeavors to defend the honor of the Christian name, and to promote pure and undefiled religion? Without intending any invidious reflection, may we not request of the reader a careful consideration of this subject? Let him remember, also, what his own observation may have taught him, that a single case of discipline, rightly conducted, gives renewed energy to the whole body, quickening every member into newness of life in the service of the Lord. Let him estimate, if he can, the moral efficacy of a living church, quickened into healthful, holy action, compared with one which has a name to live and is dead. Let him ponder well these considerations, before he decides to go over to a communion that tolerates a general neglect of the Christian duty which we have been contemplating.

CHAPTER VI.

EQUALITY AND IDENTITY OF BISHOPS AND PRESBYTERS.

Soon after the ascension of our Lord, it became expedient for the brethren to appoint a certain class of officers to superintend the secular concerns of their fraternity. These were denominated *διάκονοι, servants, ministers, deacons.* In process of time, another order of men arose among them, whose duty it was to superintend the religious interests of the church. These were denominated *οἱ προϊστάμενοι,* Rom. 12: 8. 1 Thess. 5: 12; *οἱ ἡγούμενοι,* Heb. 13: 7, 17, 24; *πρεσβύτεροι,* Acts 20: 17; *ἐπίσκοποι,* Acts 20: 28, equivalent to the terms, *presidents, leaders, elders, overseers.* These terms all indicate one and the same office, *that of a presiding officer in their religious assemblies.* Officers of this class are usually designated, by the apostles and the earliest ecclesiastical writers, as *presbyters* and *bishops,*—names which are used interchangeably and indiscriminately to denote one and the same office.

The appropriate duty of the bishop or presbyter at first was, not to teach or to preach, but to preside over the church, and to preserve order in their assemblies. "They were originally chosen as in the synagogue, not so much for the instruction and edification of the church, as for taking the lead in its general government."[1] The necessity of such a pre-

[1] Neander's Apost. Kirch. I. p. 44 seq. Comp. Siegel, Handbuch, IV. S. 223. Ziegler, Versuch, der kirchlichen Verfassungsformen, S. 3—12. Rothe, Anfänge, I. S. 153. So, also, Gieseler, Rheinwald, Böhmer, Winer, etc.

siding officer in the church at Corinth is sufficiently apparent from the apostle's rebuke of their irregularities. "How is it, then, brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying." 1 Cor. 14: 26. The apostle, however, allows all to prophesy, to exercise their spiritual gifts; and only requires them to speak "one by one," that all things may be done decently and in order. The ordinary officers of the apostolical church, then, comprised two distinct classes or orders. The one was known by the name of deacons; the other, designated by various titles, of which those most frequently used are *presbyters* and *bishops*.

Our proposition is, that Bishops and Presbyters, according to the usage of the apostles and of the earliest ecclesiastical writers, are identical and convertible terms, denoting officers of one and the same class. In this proposition we join issue with the Episcopalians, who assert that bishops were divinely appointed as an order of men superior to presbyters. We, on the other hand, affirm that presbyters were the highest grade of officers known in the apostolical and primitive churches; and that the title of bishop was originally only another name for precisely the same officer. Even after a distinction began to be made between presbyters and bishops, we affirm that the latter were not a peculiar order distinct from presbyters and superior to them. The bishop was merely one of the presbyters appointed, like the moderator, to preside over the college of his fellow-presbyters, but belonging still to the same body, performing only the same pastoral duties, and exercising only the same spiritual functions. Like the moderator of a modern presbytery or association, he still retained a ministerial parity with his brethren, in the duties, rights and privileges of the sacred office. Our sources of argument in defence of this general proposition are two-fold,—Scripture and History.

I. The scriptural argument for the equality and identity of bishops and presbyters. This may be comprised under the following heads:

1. The appellations and titles of a presbyter are used indiscriminately and interchangeably with those of a bishop.

2. A presbyter is required to possess the same qualifications as a bishop.

3. The official duties of a presbyter are the same as those of a bishop.

4. There was, in the apostolical churches, no ordinary and permanent class of ministers superior to that of presbyters.

1. The appellations and titles of a presbyter are used interchangeably with those of a bishop.

One of the most unequivocal proof-texts in the Scriptures is found in Acts 20: 17, compared with verse 28. Paul, on his journey to Jerusalem, sent from Miletus and called the *presbyters*, *πρεσβυτέρους*, *elders*, of Ephesus. And to these same presbyters, when they had come, he says, in his affectionate counsel to them, "Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you *bishops*, *ἐπισκόπους*, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." Both terms are here used in the same sentence with reference to the same men.

We have another instance, equally clear, of the indiscriminate use of the terms, in the first chapter of Paul's epistle to Titus. "For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain *presbyters*, *πρεσβυτέρους*, in every city, as I had appointed thee." Then follows an enumeration of the qualifications which are requisite in these presbyters, one of which is given in these words: "A *bishop* must be blameless, as the Steward of God."

Again, it is worthy of particular attention, that the apos-

tle, in his instructions to Timothy, 1 Tim. 3: 1—7, respecting the qualifications of a *bishop*, proceeds immediately to specify those of *deacons*, the *second class* of officers in the church, without making the least allusion to *presbyters*, though confessedly giving instructions for the appointment of the appropriate officers of the church. This omission was not a mere oversight in the writer; for he subsequently alludes to the *presbytery*, 4: 14, and commends those that rule well, 5: 17. In these passages the apostle evidently has in mind the same offices, and uses the terms bishop and presbyter, as identical in meaning.

To all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, the apostle addresses his salutation,—to the saints, with the *bishops* and *deacons*, that is, to the church and the officers of the church. Here, again, as in all the New Testament, these officers were distributed into two classes. For, had there been at Philippi a *third* order of ministers, superior to the deacons, it is incredible that the apostle could have omitted all allusion to them, in a salutation so specific. In truth, we must either charge him with neglecting an important and superior class of officers in the church at Philippi, a neglect totally inconsistent with his character, or we must admit that the presbyters are addressed in the salutation of the bishops as being one and the same with them.

The supposition, again, that these were bishops of the Episcopal order, involves the absurdity of a plurality of bishops *over the same church;* a supposition at variance with the first principles of Diocesan Episcopacy, which admits of but *one* in a city.[2] This difficulty appears to have forcibly im-

[2] "Epiphanius tells us, that Peter and Paul were both bishops of Rome at once: by which it is plain he took the title of bishop in another sense than now it is used; for now, and so for a long time upward, two bishops can no more possess one see, than two hedge-sparrows dwell in one bush. St. Peter's time was a little too early for bishops to rise."—*Hales' Works*, Vol. I. p. 110.

pressed the mind of Chrysostom. "How is this?" exclaims the eloquent patriarch. "Were there many bishops in the same city? By no means; but he calls the presbyters by this name [bishops]; for at that time this was the common appellation of both."[3]

Finally, we appeal to 1 Pet. 5: 2, 3, where the apostle, as a fellow-presbyter, exhorts the presbyters to feed the flock of God, *taking the oversight of them, ἐπισκοποῦντες, acting the bishop, performing the duties of a bishop over them*, requiring of them the same duties which the apostle Paul enjoins upon the presbyter-bishops of Ephesus. As at Ephesus, where Paul gave his charge to those presbyters, so here, again, it is evident that there could have been no *bishop* over those whom Peter commits to the oversight of these *presbyters*. But who are the flock in this instance? Plainly, any body of those Christians scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, to whom he addresses his epistle. These Christians, throughout this vast extent of country, are committed to the care of their *presbyters*, who are severally to act as the pastors and *bishops* of their respective charges.

Thus it appears that the appellations and titles of a presbyter are used indiscriminately and interchangeably with those of a bishop. In the same sentence even, and generally throughout the writings of the apostles, these are perfectly convertible terms, as different names of the same thing. This fact is very forcibly exhibited in the following summary from the Rev. Dr. Mason. "That the terms *bishop* and *presbyter*, in their application to the first class of officers, are perfectly convertible, the one pointing out the very same class of rulers with the other, is as evident as the sun

[3] *Σὺν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις. Τί τοῦτο; μιᾶς πόλεως πολλοὶ ἐπίσκοποι ἦσαν; Οὐδαμῶς, ἀλλὰ τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους οὕτως ἐκάλεσε· τότε γὰρ τέως ἐκοινώνουν τοῖς ὀνόμασι.—In Phil.* 1: 1. p. 199 seq. Tom. 11.

'shining in his strength.' Timothy was instructed by the apostle Paul in the qualities which were to be required in those who *desired the office of a* BISHOP.* Paul and Barnabas *ordained* PRESBYTERS *in every church*† which they had founded. Titus is directed to *ordain in every city* PRESBYTERS who are to be *blameless, the husband of one wife.* And the reason of so strict a scrutiny into character is thus rendered, *for a* BISHOP *must be blameless.*‡ If this does not identify the *bishop* with the *presbyter*, in the name of common sense, what can do it? Suppose a law, pointing out the qualifications of a sheriff, were to say, a *sheriff* must be a man of pure character, of great activity, and resolute spirit; for it is highly necessary that a *governor* be of unspotted reputation, etc., the bench and bar would be rather puzzled for a construction, and would be compelled to conclude, either that something had been left out in transcribing the law, or that governor and sheriff meant the same sort of officer; or that their honors of the legislature had taken leave of their wits. The case is not a whit stronger than the case of a presbyter and bishop in the epistle to Titus. Again: Paul, when on his last journey to Jerusalem, sends for the PRESBYTERS of Ephesus to meet him at Miletus, and there enjoins these PRESBYTERS *to feed the church of God over which the Holy Ghost had made them* BISHOPS.§ It appears, then, that the *bishops* to whom Paul refers in his instructions to Timothy, were neither more nor less than plain *presbyters.* To a man who has no turn to serve, no interest in perverting the obvious meaning of words, one would think that a mathematical demonstration could not carry more satisfactory evidence."[4]

These terms, as the reader must have noticed, are also precise and definite, descriptive of a peculiar office, which

* 1 Tim. 3: 1. † Acts 14: 23. ‡ Tit. 1: 5. § Acts 20: 17, 28.
[4] Mason's Works, Vol. III. pp. 41—43. Comp. King, Prim. Christ. pp. 67, 68.

he is in no danger of mistaking for any other in the apostolic church. The name of *apostle* is not in a single instance exchanged for that of bishop, or deacon. But the term *presbyter*, on the contrary, is in a few instances assumed by the apostles as an appropriate designation of their office. "The elder, πρεσβύτερος, the presbyter unto the elect lady," John, Epist. 2, 1: 1. The *presbyter* unto the well beloved Gaius, Epist. 3, 1: 1. and 1 Peter 5: 1. If therefore, this use of the name is of any importance in the argument, it intimates that presbyters rather than bishops are the true successors of the apostles. But in truth, these terms are not confounded with any other title; and for the very obvious reason, that they are descriptive of an office distinct from all others. Why, then, are these particular terms mutually interchanged one with the other, save that they are equally descriptive of the same office? Indeed, the original identity of bishops and presbyters, is now conceded by Episcopalians themselves. "That presbyters were called bishops I readily grant; that this proves that the officer who was then called a bishop, and consequently the office, was the same."[5] "The Episcopalian cannot be found who denies the interchangeable employment of the terms bishop and presbyter in the New Testament."[6] Bishop Burnet admits that they "are used promiscuously by the writers of the first two centuries."

The scriptural title of the office under consideration is usually that of presbyter or elder. It had long been in use in the synagogue. It denoted an office familiar to every Jew. It conveyed a precise idea of a ruler whose powers were well defined and perfectly understood. When adopted into the Christian church, its meaning must have been easily settled; for the office was essentially the same in the church as previously in the synagogue. Accordingly, it constantly occurs

[5] Bowden, Works on Episcop. Vol. 1. p. 161.
[6] Chapman, cited in Smyth's Pres. and Prelacy, p. 111.

in the writings of the apostle, to denote an officer familiarly known, but having no resemblance to a modern diocesan bishop. The term, bishop, occurs but five times in the New Testament; and, in each instance, in such a connection as to be easily identified with that of presbyter. The former is derived from the Greek language, the latter has a Jewish origin. Accordingly, it is worthy of notice, that the apostles, when addressing Jewish Christians, use the term presbyter; but in their addresses to Gentile converts, they adopt the term *bishop*, as less obnoxious to those who spoke the Greek language.[7]

2. A presbyter is required to possess the same qualifications as a bishop.

The apostle has specified at length the qualifications, both for a bishop and a presbyter, which for the sake of comparison, are here set in opposite columns.

QUALIFICATIONS.

For a bishop, Tim. 3: 2—7.	For a presbyter, Tit. 1: 6—10.
A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife, one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity. For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God? Vs. 2, 4, 5.	If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, (who are) not accused of riot, or unruly. V. 6.
Vigilant, *νηφάλεον*, *circumspect*, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach. V. 2.	A lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate, holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort, and to convince the gainsayers. Vs. 8, 9.

[7] Rothe, Anfänge, I. 218, 219. Neander, Apost. Kirch. I. 178, 179. Schoene, Geschichtsforschungen, I. 247—249. Comp. Bishop Croft, in Smyth's Apost. Succ. p. 159.

Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient, ἐπιεικῆ, *gentle, not soon angry*, not a brawler, not covetous, not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must have a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach, and the snare of the devil. Vs. 3, 6, 7.

A bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God, not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre. V. 7.

The qualifications are identical throughout. Is a blameless, sober and virtuous life, a meek and quiet spirit, required of a bishop? so are they of a presbyter. Whatever is needful for the one, is equally essential for the other. If, then, there be this wide and perpetual distinction between the two, which Episcopacy claims, how extraordinary that the apostle, when stating the qualifications of a humble presbyter, should not abate an iota from those which are requisite for the high office of a bishop. How strong the presumption, or rather how irresistible the conviction, that this dignitary of the modern church was totally unknown in those days of primitive, republican simplicity; and that the bishop of the apostolic churches was neither more nor less than a plain, simple presbyter, the pastor of any church over which he had been duly constituted. The conclusion is unavoidable, that, in the case before us, the author is only designating the same office by different names, of similar import. Such is the decision of the great Jerome, the most learned of the Latin fathers. "In both epistles," referring to those now under consideration, "whether bishops or presbyters are to be elected, (for with the ancients, bishops and presbyters must have been the same, the one being descriptive of rank and the other of age,) they are required each to be the husband of one wife."[8]

[8] In utraque epistola sive episcopi sive presbyteri (quanquam apud

3. The duties of a presbyter are the same as those of a bishop.

As bishops and presbyters are called by the same names, and required to possess the same qualifications, *so they are summoned to discharge the same official duties.* Their duties, severally and equally, are to rule, to counsel and instruct, to administer the ordinances, and to ordain.

(*α*) Both exercised the same authority over the church.

If bishops were known in the apostolical churches, as a distinct order, the right of government confessedly belonged to them. We have, therefore, only to show that presbyters exercised the same right. This exercise of authority is denoted in the New Testament by several terms, each of which is distinctly applied to presbyters.

(*α*) Such is *ἡγέομαι, to lead, to guide,* etc. In Heb. 13: 7 and 17, this term occurs. Remember them that have the rule over you, *τῶν ἡγουμένων ὑμῶν.* Obey them that have rule over you, *τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ὑμῶν.* The first exhortation to the Hebrews, the apostle enforces by an immediate reference to their *deceased pastors;* and the second, by reference to those who still survived to watch for their souls. Are these references to diocesan bishops, or to those presbyters who regularly performed among the Hebrews the duties of a presbyter?

(*β*) Another term expressive of authority over the church is, *προΐστημι, to preside, to rule.* Xenophon uses this verb to express the act of leading or ruling an ancient chorus and an army.[9] The apostle Paul uses the same to express the authority which the presbyters exercised as *rulers* of the church.

"We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor

veteres iidem episcopi et presbyteri fuerint quia illud nomen dignitatis est, hoc aetatis) jubentur monogami in clerum eligi.—*Ep.* 83, *ad Oceanum,* Tom. 4. p. 648.

[9] *Οὐδέν ὅμοιόν ἐστι χοροῦ τε καὶ στρατεύματος προεστάναι.* "Between the *taking the lead* of a chorus and *the command* of an army," both expressed by *προεστάναι,* "there is no analogy."—*Mem.* 3. 4. 3.

among you and *are over you*, προϊσταμένους, in the Lord." 1 Thess. 5: 12. Prelates of the church, these *presbyters* cannot have been; for there were several, it appears, in this single city, a circumstance totally incompatible with the organization of diocesan Episcopacy. The whole, taken together, is descriptive, not of a bishop in his see, but of a presbyter, a pastor, in the faithful discharge of his parochial duties. Again, "Let the elders, presbyters, that *rule well*, be accounted worthy of double honor," οἱ καλῶς προιστῶτες πρεσβύτεροι. 1 Tim. 5: 17. Here are presbyters ruling over the church of Ephesus, where, according to the Episcopal theory, Timothy, as bishop, had established the seat of his apostolical see.

(γ) Another term of frequent occurrence, in writers both sacred and profane of approved authority, is ποιμαίνω, *to feed*, metaphorically, *to cherish, to provide for, to rule, to govern.* It expresses the office, and comprehends all the duties of a shepherd. This term the apostle uses in his exhortation to the *presbyters* of Ephesus at Miletus. "Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you *bishops, to feed*, ποιμαίνειν, the church of God." Beyond all question, this term, both in classic and hellenistic Greek, expresses the power of government. Both this and ἡγούμενος above mentioned, are used in the same passage to express the government of Christ, the chief Shepherd, over his people Israel. "Thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princess of Juda, for out of thee shall come a governor, ἡγούμενος, who shall rule, ποιμανεῖ, my people Israel." Without further illustration, which might easily be added, we have sufficient evidence, from what has been said, that the presbyters were invested with all the authority to guide, govern, and provide for the church, which the bishop himself could exercise. The very same terms which express the highest power of government, and which are applied to the office even of the great Head of the Church, are used to express the authority of presbyters, and to set forth the power

with which they are invested to rule and feed the church. No intimation is given of any higher power in any minister of Christ; neither have we terms to express any superior authority. The conclusion therefore is, that they "are invested with the highest power of government known in the church."

(*b*) Presbyters were the authorized *counsellors of the church;* and, in connection with the apostles, constituted the highest court of appeal for the settlement of controversies in the church.

About the year 45 or 50, a spirited controversy arose at Antioch, which threatened to rend the church, and to hinder the progress of that gospel which Paul and Barnabas had begun successfully to preach to the Gentiles. It was of the utmost importance that this dispute should be immediately and finally settled. For this purpose, a delegation, consisting of Paul, and Barnabas, and others, was sent from the church at Antioch, on an embassy to Jerusalem, to submit the subject under discussion to the examination and decision of the church, with the apostles and presbyters. This delegation was kindly received by the members of the church at Jerusalem, with their officers, the apostles, teachers and elders, and to them the whole subject of the dissension at Antioch was submitted. Peter, John and James were, at this time, at Jerusalem, and, with Paul, Barnabas and Titus, were members of this council. The subject was discussed at length on both sides, but the concurring opinions of Peter, Paul and James finally prevailed, and the council united harmoniously in the sentiments expressed by these apostles. It is observable, however, that the *result of the council* was given, not in the name of James[10] or any one of the apostles,

[10] That James did not draw up this decree as "the head of the church at Jerusalem," and as his "authoritative sentence," is unanswerably shown by Rev. Dr. Mason, in his Review of Essays on Episcopacy. The amount of the argument is, that James *simply expresses his opinion*, verse 19; just as Peter and Paul had done before.

but conjointly, by the apostles, and *presbyters*, and brethren. Acts 15: 23. With this decision the delegation returned to Antioch, accompanied by Judas and Silas. The message of the council was received by the assembled church at Antioch, who gladly acquiesced in that decision. Throughout the whole narrative the presbyters appear as the authorized counsellors of the church, and *the only ordinary officers of the church*, whose opinion is sought in connection with that of the apostles, without any intimation of an intermediate grade of bishops.[11]

(*c*) It was the appropriate office of the presbyters to administer the ordinances of the church.

It is inconceivable that the performance of these duties could have been restricted to the apostles. The sacrament was at first administered daily;[12] and afterwards, on each Lord's day as a part of public worship. The frequency and universality of the ordinance, of necessity required that it should be administered by the ordinary ministers of the church. Baptism, by a like necessity, devolved upon them. The numerous and far-spreading triumphs of the gospel utterly forbid the idea, that the apostles, few in number, and charged with the high commission of preaching the gospel,

So the word, *κρίνω*, *in the connection in which it is used*, implies, and so it was understood by the sacred historian, who in Acts 16: 4, declares, that the "authoritative sentence," the decrees, were ordained by the *apostles and presbyters*. Comp. also, Acts 21: 25. The case was not referred to James, neither could it be submitted to him as bishop of Jerusalem, Antioch lying entirely without his diocese, even on the supposition that Jerusalem was the seat of his Episcopal see. The authority of this decree was also acknowledged in all the churches of Asia. The supposition, that it was the official and authoritative sentence of James as bishop, exalts him above all the other apostles, who were members of the council, and gives him a power, far-reaching and authoritative beyond that which belonged to St. Peter himself, the prelatical head of the church.

[11] Comp. Rothe, Anfänge, Vol. I. S. 181, 182.

[12] Neander, Apost. Kirch. 1. p. 30.

and giving themselves wholly to this as their appropriate work, could have found time and means for going everywhere, and baptizing with their own hands all that believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. Besides, they appear expressly to have disclaimed this work, and to have entrusted the service chiefly to other hands. "I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas; besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me, not to baptize, but to preach." 1 Cor. 1: 14—17. Cornelius, again, was baptized, not by Peter, but by some christian disciple, agreeable to his command. The apostles, indeed, very seldom baptized. The inference therefore is, that this service was by them committed to the presbyters, the ordinary officers of the church.

The right of presbyters to administer these ordinances is clearly asserted by Augusti and other writers on the subject, as exhibited in our Christian Antiquities.[13] Even the Episcopalian, who claims this right as the peculiar prerogative of the bishop, and maintains that the presbyter only acted as his representative, still admits that, previous to the establishment of the Episcopal system, the ordinances were administered by presbyters. To this effect is one of the latest and best authorities. "In the earliest times, when no formal distinction between *ἐπίσκοποι* [*bishops*], and *πρεσβύτεροι*, [*presbyters*], had taken place, the presbyters, especially the *προεστῶτες* [*presiding presbyters*], 1 Tim. 5: 17, discharged those Episcopal functions, which, afterwards, when a careful distinction of ecclesiastical officers had been made, they were not permitted to discharge, otherwise than as substitutes or vicars of a bishop. Instances, however, do sometimes occur in later times, of presbyters having officiated in matters which, according to the canon-law, belonged only to the Episcopal office."[14]

[13] Chap. III. § 8. [14] Riddle, Chr. Antiquities, p. 233.

Tertullian asserts the right even of the *laity* both to baptize, *tingere*, and to administer the sacrament, *offere*. His reasons are, that the distinction between the clergy and laity is the device of the church,—that in the Scriptures all are priests of God, and that, having the right of priesthood in themselves, the laity are at liberty to perform the offices of the priesthood, as they may have occasion.[15]

Even Rigaltius, a Roman Catholic, in commenting on this passage, admits that the laity were permitted, in the primitive church, to administer the ordinances, though it was afterwards forbidden in the ecclesiastical law. The same is also affirmed by the learned Erasmus.[16] If further evidence of the fact be needful it may be found given at length in the treatises of Grotius.[17]

[15] Vani erimus si putaverimus, quod sacerdotibus non liceat, láicis licere. Nonne et laici sacerdotes sumus? Scriptum est regnum quoque nos et sacerdotes Deo et Patri suo fecit. *Differentiam inter ordinem et plebem constituit ecclesiae auctoritas*, et honor per ordinis consessum sanctificatus a Deo, ibi ecclesiastici ordinis non est confessus? Et *offers* et *tingis;* sacerdos es tibi solus. Sed ubi tres, ecclesia est, licet láici; unusquisque de sua fide vivit; nec est personarum exceptio apud Deum, quoniam non auditores legis justificabuntur a Deo, sed factores, secundum quod et apostolus dicit. *Igitur si habes* jus sacerdotis in temetipso ubi necesse sit, habeas oportet etiam disciplinam sacerdotis, ubi necesse sit habere jus sacerdotis.—*De Exhort. Cast.* c. 7. The same thing also is implied in another passage, from Tertullian, *De Virgin. Vel.* c. 9, in which he denies to *women* this right. The denial of the right to *women* is an admission that it was the authorized prerogative of the other sex.

[16] Constat temporibus apostolorum fuisse synaxin quam laici inter se faciebant adhibita praecatione et benedictione, et eam panem, ut est probabile, appellabant corpus Domini, ut frequenter etiam sacris literis eadem vox signo et rei signatae accommodatur Fieri enim potest ut de hac synaxi loquatur ibi Origenes.—*Ep* Lib. 26, Vol. III. Origen, in the middle of the third century, was permitted by two bishops, in Palestine, to explain the Scriptures to their congregation, though he had never been ordained. And many bishops of the East, according to Eusebius, allowed even the laity to preach.—*Eccl. Hist.* 6. c. 19. Comp. Neander, Allgemein. Gesch. 1. S. 336, 2d edit.

[17] Tract., *De Coenae Administratione ubi pastores non sunt.*

(*d*) It was the right of presbyters to ordain.

What reason can be assigned, may we ask, why they should not solemnize this rite, as well as perform other ministerial duties? What solemnity has this rite above all others, that its performance must be restricted to one order of the priesthood? It is the right of the presbyter to baptize, to administer the sacrament, to instruct and provide for all the spiritual wants of the flock of Christ, as the shepherd and bishop of their souls; and has he no right to induct into the sacred office, his fellow-laborers and successors in the service of the chief Shepherd?[18] Until assured of the contrary by the word of God, we must presume that the right to ordain belongs to those presbyters whom the Holy Ghost has made overseers of the flock, to feed the church of God.

The subject of our present inquiry hardly admits of an appeal to Scripture; for the writers of the New Testament have left us no specific instructions on this subject. Neither have we any uniform precedent in the apostolical churches. The apostles were not set apart by any solemnity beside their commission from Christ. He lifted up his hands, indeed, and blessed them, as he was parted from them, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost. The act was significant of the miraculous communication of spiritual gifts, as in various other instances, Acts 8: 17. 19: 6; but had no analogy to Episcopal ordination. No record is given of any formal ordination of Matthias, after his election to the apostolical office.

The seven deacons were inducted into their office by prayer, and *the laying on of hands.* This may have been, and perhaps was, the usual mode of setting apart any one to a religious service. But was the imposition of hands exclusively ordination? It was a rite familiar to the Jews; and denoted *either a benediction, or the communication of miraculous gifts.* Jacob, in blessing the sons of Joseph, laid his

[18] Comp. Gerhardi, Loci Theolog. Vol. XII. p. 159.

hands upon their heads. So Jesus took young children in his arms and blessed them, *laying his hands upon them.* So Paul and Barnabas were dismissed, to go on their missionary tour, with the blessing of the brethren at Antioch, by the laying on of hands, Acts 13: 3. Whatever may have been the specific office of the prophet and teachers at Antioch, they were not apostles. On the supposition, therefore, that the laying on of hands was performed by them, no reason appears why the same might not be done with equal propriety by presbyters. But this was not an ordination of Paul and Barnabas; for they had long been engaged in ministerial duties.

The imposition of hands appears also in some instances to have occurred more than once, as in the case of Timothy, upon whom this rite was performed by the presbytery, 1 Tim. 4: 14; and again, by the apostle Paul, 2 Tim. 1: 6. Such at least is the understanding which Rothe has of the case.[19] This fact forbids the supposition, that the laying on of hands was the solemnizing act in the rite of ordination, which, according to all ecclesiastical usage, cannot be repeated. In the passage, Acts 14: 23, the phrase *χειροτονήσαντες*, etc. has been already shown to relate, not to the consecration, but to the *appointment* of the elders in every church.[20]

[19] Rothe, Anfänge der Christ. Kirch. S. 161.

[20] "Where, it may be asked, resides the *right*, or power, and in what consists the importance of *ordination?* It is not the source of ministerial authority; for that, as it has been endeavored to show, does not, and cannot, rest on human foundation. It does not admit to the pastoral office; for even in the Episcopal church, the title to office, which is an indispensable pre-requisite, is derived from the nomination of the person who has the disposal of the case. It is not office, but official character, which Episcopal ordination is supposed to convey, together with whatsoever the advocates of Episcopacy may choose to understand by those solemn words, used by the ordaining bishop (an application of them which Nonconformists deem awfully inappropriate), 'Receive the Holy Ghost.' The Jewish ordination, on the contrary, although sometimes accompanied, when admin-

The imposition of hands is a rite derived from the Jews, and significant of the communication of the gifts of the Father. This venerable rite was used by Christ, and with great propriety has been retained in the Christian church. But with the apostles it was the customary mode of imparting the χαρίσματα, the miraculous gifts of that age. So the converts at Samaria received the Holy Ghost, Acts 8: 17, and in the like manner, when Paul had laid his hands upon the Ephesian converts, the Holy Ghost came upon them, *and they spake with tongues and prophesied*, Acts 19: 6. In the same sense is to be understood the gift, χαρίσμα, which was bestowed on Timothy by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, 1 Tim. 4: 14. The meaning

istered by the apostles, by the communication of miraculous gifts, was in itself no more than a significant form of benediction on admission to a specific appointment. Of this nature were the offices connected with the synagogue, in contradistinction from those of the priesthood. When Paul and Barnabas were sent out from the church at Antioch, they submitted to the same impressive ceremony: not surely that either authority, or power of any kind, or miraculous qualifications, devolved upon the apostle and his illustrious companion, by virtue of the imposition of Presbyterian hands! What then is ordination? *The answer is, a decent and becoming solemnity, adopted from the Jewish customs by the primitive church, significant of the separation of an individual to some specific appointment in the christian ministry, and constituting both a recognition on the part of the officiating presbyters, of the ministerial character of the person appointed, and a desirable sanction of the proceedings of the church.* It is, however, something more than a mere circumstance, the imposition of hands being designed to express that fervent benediction which accompanied the ceremony, and which constitutes the true spirit of the rite. To an occasion which, when the awful responsibility of the pastoral charge is adequately felt, imparts to the prayers and the affectionate aid of those who are fathers and brethren in the ministry, a more especial value, the sign and solemn act of benediction must appear peculiarly appropriate. This venerable ceremony may also be regarded as a sort of bond of fellowship among the churches of Christ, a sign of unity, and an act of brotherhood."—*Conder's Protestant Nonconformity*, Vol. I. p. 242.

simply is, that by the imposition of hands that peculiar spiritual gift denominated *prophecy* was imparted to Timothy.[21] Of the same import are 2 Tim. 1: 6, and 1 Tim. 5: 22. Both relate to the communication of spiritual gifts. If the rite of ordination was implied and included in it, then the same act must be expressive both of this induction into office, and of the communication of spiritual gifts. This is Neander's explanation of the transaction. "The consecration to offices in the church was conducted in the following manner. After those persons to whom its performance belonged, had laid their hands on the head of the candidate, —a symbolic action borrowed from the Jewish סְמִיכָה,—they besought the Lord that he would grant, what this symbol denoted, the impartation of the gifts of his Spirit for carrying on the office thus undertaken in his name. If, as was presumed, the whole ceremony corresponded to its intent, and the requisite disposition existed in those for whom it was performed, there was reason for considering the communication of the spiritual gifts necessary for the office, as connected with this consecration performed in the name of Christ. And since Paul from this point of view designated the whole of the solemn proceeding (without separating it into its various elements), by that which was its external symbol (as, in scriptural phraseology, a single act of a transaction consisting of several parts, and sometimes that which was most striking to the senses, is often mentioned for the whole); he required of Timothy that he should seek to revive afresh the spiritual gifts that he had received by the laying on of hands."[22]

The question has been asked, but never yet answered, who ordained Apollos? See Acts 18: 24—26. 1 Cor. 3: 5—7.

It remains to consider the case of Paul the apostle. Of

[21] Rothe, Anfänge, I. S. 161.

[22] Neander, Apost. Kirch. 1. 213. Comp. pp. 88, 300, 3d edit.

whom did he receive ordination? One Ananias, a disciple and a devout man according to the law, and having a good report of all the Jews that dwelt at Damascus,—this man prayed and laid his hands upon Paul, and *straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues.* Soon after this he spent three years in Arabia; then, for a whole year he and Barnabas *assembled themselves with the church and taught much people* at Antioch, Acts 11: 26. After all this, he was sent forth by the Holy Ghost, on his mission to the Gentiles. Preparatory to this mission he was recommended to the grace of God, by fasting, prayer and the imposition of hands. Even this was not done by any of the apostles, but by certain prophets and teachers, such as Simeon, Lucius and Manaen. Even on the supposition, therefore, that these were the solemnities of Paul's ordination, he was not Episcopally ordained. But, in truth, they had no reference whatever to his ordination. On the authority of his divine commission, he had already been a preacher for several years. It was, not a new appointment, but an appointment to a new work, which in no degree helps forward the cause of prelatical ordination.[23]

We have, indeed, adopted from apostolic usage, a significant, impressive and becoming rite, by which to induct one into the sacred office of the ministry. The rite ought always to be observed. But no direct precept, no uniform usage, gives to this rite the sanction of divine authority; above all, there is not in all the Scriptures, the least authority for confining the administration of it exclusively to the bishop. The idea of a bishop's receiving the Holy Ghost in regular succession from the holy apostles, and transmitting the heavenly grace to others by the laying on of his hands, is a figment of prelatical pride and superstition unauthorized in Scripture, and unknown in the earliest ages of the church.

[23] Bowdler's Letters on Apostolical Succession, p. 22.

But the historical argument in relation to the subject of ordination by presbyters is considered below.

The claims of Episcopacy, on the ground of an original distinction between the names and titles of bishop and presbyters seem now to be wholly abandoned, even by Episcopalians themselves. "Even if Timothy," says the Christian Observer, "had been distinctly called bishop of Ephesus, and Titus bishop of Crete, Episcopalians would build nothing on that nomenclature as regards Episcopacy, being a distinct order from Presbytery, for presbyters are admitted to have been called bishops. The disparity is proved by other considerations."[24]

Even the church of Rome acknowledges the identity of the orders of presbyter and bishop, and reckons among the three greater, or holy orders, those of priest, deacon and subdeacon.

Bishop Onderdonk makes also the same concession. "As some readers of this essay may not be familiar with the controversy, it is proper to advert to the fact, that the name 'bishops,' which now designates the highest grade of the ministry, is not appropriated to that office in Scripture. That name is given to the middle order, or *presbyters;* and all that we read in the New Testament, concerning 'bishops' (including, of course, the words 'overseers' and 'oversight,' which have the same derivation), is to be regarded as pertaining to that middle grade." Bishops and presbyters are identical, then, in the Scriptures, according to our American bishop, who traces his own descent from a higher grade of offices known by no specific name in Scripture, but embracing the apostles, and Titus and Timothy, and the angels of the seven churches who are not honored with any distinct, official title.[25] The whole fabric of Episcopacy is here

[24] Christian Observer, 1842, p. 59.

[25] "The highest grade is there found in those called apostles, and in some other individuals, as Titus and Timothy, and the angels of

made to rest upon a certain nameless grade, whose successors have uncourteously appropriated to themselves exclusively an official title which by divine right belonged also to the presbyters. The issue of the argument, accordingly, turns chiefly upon the proposition which comes next under consideration.

4. There was, in the apostolical churches, no *ordinary* class of ministers superior to that of presbyters or bishops.

We deny entirely that Timothy, or Titus, or any other person, or class of persons named in Scripture, represents an order of ministers, in the churches planted by the apostles, who were invested with prerogatives superior to those of presbyters; and whose office was to be perpetuated in the church of Christ. In opposition to these Episcopal pretensions, we remark:

(*a*) That no distinct appellation is given to the supposed order, and no class of religious teachers represents them in the Scriptures.

If there were such an order, it is surely extraordinary that it should have been left without a name, or a distinctive appellation of any kind. Here is the highest grade of officers possessed exclusively of certain ministerial rights and powers, from whom all clerical grace has been transmitted by Episcopal succession, age after age, down to the present time; and yet this grade is distinguished by no peculiar appellation, and represented by no single class or order of men. The inferior orders, presbyters and deacons, are specified with great distinctness, but the highest and most important of all has no definite name, no distinct and single representative. Yet the modern bishop, with astonishing credulity traces back his spiritual lineage, we had almost said, through a thousand gen-

the seven churches of Asia, who have no official designation given them. It was after the apostolic age that the name 'bishop' was taken from the second order and appropriated to the first."—*Bishop Onderdonk's Episcopacy, tested by Scripture.*

erations, in strange uncertainty all the while, to whom he shall at last attach himself, or with whom claim kindred. If Peter fails him, he flies to Paul, to James, to Timothy, to Titus, to the angel of the church, to—he knows not whom. He is, however, a legitimate descendant and successor of some apostolical bishop. He is sure of that; but that bishop—nobody knows who he is, or what, precisely, his office may have been!

(*b*) We deny that the Scriptures give any authority for ascribing to either of the apostles, or to their assistants and fellow-laborers, the exercise of Episcopal authority.

The fathers do indeed concur in assigning Episcopal Sees to several of the apostles, and to their helpers. And modern Episcopalians refer us with great confidence to James, to Timothy, Titus, and to the angels of the churches in the epistles of the apocalypse, as instances of primitive bishops. Now we deny that either of these exercised the rights and prerogatives of an Episcopal bishop.

(α) James was not bishop of Jerusalem.

We have already seen[26] with what care the apostles guarded against any assumption of authority over the churches. They taught, they counselled, they administered, they reproved, indeed, with the authority belonging to ambassadors of God and ministers of Christ. But they assumed not to rule and to govern with the official power of a diocesan. The evidence of this position is already before the reader, and to his consideration we submit it without further remark.

But James, it is said, resided at Jerusalem, as bishop of that church and diocese; and, in this capacity, offers us a scriptural example of an apostolical bishop. The Episcopal functions of this bishop, therefore, require a particular consideration.

In the days of Claudius Cæsar, arose a dearth throughout Judea, so distressing that a charitable contribution was

[26] Chapter 1.

made, and relief sent by the hands of Barnabas and Saul, to the brethren in Judea, residing in the supposed diocese of this bishop of Jerusalem. To whom was this charity sent? Not to the bishop, but to the *presbyters*, the appropriate officers of that church, Acts 11: 30.

A delegation was sent on a certain occasion from Antioch to Jerusalem for counsel. They were received, not by the bishop, but by the church, the apostles and the presbyters. Acts 15: 4. Not a syllable is said of the bishop. The council convene to consider the question which has been submitted for their decision. Who compose this council? The apostles and presbyters, again, without any mention of the bishop. After the discussion, in which James with the other apostles, naturally bears a prominent part, who act in making up the result? The apostles and presbyters. *It seemed good to the apostles and presbyters, with all the church.* Who appear in the salutation of the letter addressed to the church at Antioch? The apostles, the presbyters and the brethren. Mention is again made, Acts 16: 4, of the decrees of this council. Who now appear as the authors of these decrees? The apostles and presbyters. Where is our diocesan all this time? Plainly he has no official character; no existence in this church. The idea of a diocesan bishop over this community, just now living together in the simplicity of their mutual love, is an idle fancy, devoid of all reality. Had James been bishop of Jerusalem at this time, he would have acted a conspicuous part in all these concerns, as we have seen that the presbyters did. His high office would have given him a place vastly more prominent than theirs in all these transactions; whereas they, with the apostles, were the chief actors, as the individuals upon whom rested the government of the church at Jerusalem.[27]

James appears to have chiefly resided at this city for good

[27] Rothe, Anfänge, I. S. 267 seq.

and sufficient reasons, but not at all to have remained there as the prelatical head of that church or diocese. The holy city was the seat of the Christian religion; and, to the apostles, the centre of their operations. It was the church to which all referred, as did the church at Antioch, as they might have occasion, for counsel, instruction and support. What more natural than that one of the twelve should remain, as the representative of the college of the apostles, to give direction to their operations and their councils? And for this important trust, James, one of the kindred of our Lord according to the flesh, from his youth a Nazarene, intimately acquainted with all the national peculiarities and prejudices of the Jews, and a blameless and faithful follower of Christ, was eminently qualified. The testimony of Hegesippus is that "he was holy from his mother's womb," that on account of his eminent righteousness he was styled the Just. He represents the Scribes and Pharisees as saying to him, "We all put our confidence in thee; and we, and all the people, bear thee witness that thou art just, and respectest not the person of any man."[28] James the Just, then, remained at Jerusalem, as the delegate of the college of the apostles, and the honored counsellor and adviser of the churches, but with no pretensions to diocesan or prelatical authority over them.

As a Jew, as the brother of our Lord, as well as by the amiable characteristics mentioned above, he was eminently qualified to serve as mediator between the opposite parties of Jewish and Gentile converts; and to counsel, and to act for the peace of the church. But in all this he acted, not as a bishop, but as an apostle, in that divine character, and by that authority, which he possessed as an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, and which, as Neander has well observed, could be delegated to none other.[29]

[28] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 2. c. 23.

[29] Introduction, p. 19. Also, Apost. Kirch. 2. c. 1. p. 14 seq.

But do not Clement of Alexandria,[30] Hegesippus,[31] the Apostolical Constitutions,[32] Eusebius,[33] Cyril of Jerusalem,[34] Epiphanius,[35] Chrysostom,[36] Jerome,[37] Augustine,[38] and many others of later date, all agree that James was bishop of Jerusalem? Grant it all. We admit that these all describe him as bishop of Jerusalem. And are you not yet satisfied that James was bishop of this parent church? No, by no means. Their declaration only relates to a disputed point in the history of the Acts of the Apostles, upon which we, perhaps, are as competent to decide as they. With the same historical data in view, why cannot a judgment be made upon them as safely in the nineteenth century as in the third or the fifth? With what propriety these ancient fathers denominate James bishop of Jerusalem, let the reader himself judge in view of the foregoing considerations.

But Hegesippus lived in the second century, within one hundred years of the apostolic age, and must be an unexceptionable witness. What then is his testimony? Simply that he took charge of the church *in connection with the apostles*, for such must the term *μετά* imply, if it means anything. This use of this preposition, however, is not common, and the authenticity of the passage is doubtful, *διαδέχεται δὲ— τὴν ἐκκλησίαν μετὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων*. He remained chiefly at Jerusalem, the centre of operations for all of the apostles, and had, if you please, the immediate supervision of this

[30] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 2. c. 1.

[31] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 2. c. 23.

[32] Lib. 6. Ep. 14. p. 346.

[33] Lib. 2. c. 1. 2. c. 23. 3. c. 5. 7. c. 19. Comment. in Hesai. 17: 5. Vol. II. p. 422. Montfaucon, Collec. Nov. Pat. et Scrip. Graec. ed. Paris, 1706.

[34] Catech. 4. Ep. 28. p. 65. ed. Touttée.

[35] Haer. 78. Antidicomarianitar. § 5. p. 1039.

[36] Hom. 38, in Ep. ad Corinth, Vol. X. p. 355.

[37] Catal. Script. Eccl. s. v. Jacob, frater Domini, Vol. I. p. 170. Comment. in Ep. ad Gal. 1: 19. Vol. IX. p. 128.

[38] Contra literas Petiliani, L. 2. c. 51. § 118. Vol. IX. p. 172.

church in connection with the other apostles. Aside from the Scriptures, therefore, nothing appears from this writer to show that he exercised the independent authority of bishop over the church. After the rise of the hierarchy, the Episcopal fathers that have been mentioned, may have interpreted the testimony of this author into a declaration of the Episcopal office of James. If so, we are at liberty to challenge the authority of these fathers on the point under consideration. Like them we have the historical record before us, and the means of forming an independent opinion.[39]

Indeed, antiquity itself, in the language of Milton, "hath turned over the controversy to that sovereign book which we had fondly straggled from." After refuting other traditions, he adds, "as little can your advantage be from Hegesippus, an historian, of the same time, not extant, but cited by Eusebius. His words are, 'that in every city all things so stood in his time as the law and the prophets, and our Lord did preach.' If they stood so, then stood not bishops above presbyters. For what our Lord and his disciples taught, God be thanked, we have no need to go learn of him."[40]

The churches, as we have already seen, were at this time entirely independent. They had no confederate relations with each other. Each was composed of any number of believers associated together by common consent, for the enjoyment of the word and ordinances of their common Lord. Besides their union of faith and fellowship of spirit, they had one bond of union in the instruction, care and oversight which the apostles exercised in common over all the churches. This general supervision the apostles exercised conjointly, and thus formed a common bond of connection between the different fraternities; going themselves, from place to place, confirming the churches, and reporting to each the

[39] Rothe, Anfänge der Christ. Kirch. I. 263—272.
[40] Prose Works, Vol. I. p. 86.

faith and piety of such as they had visited. What care the apostle Paul took to encourage this fellowship of the churches, is manifested in the salutations which he sends in their behalf. *All the churches in Christ salute you*, Rom. 16: 16. *The churches of Asia salute you. All the brethren greet you*, 1 Cor. 16: 19, 20.

Under these circumstances, the churches severally referred to the apostles, for instruction, for counsel, and for assistance, as they might have occasion. This oversight the apostles constantly exercised; caring for all, and watching for all, as they had opportunity, that thus they might, as far as possible, supply the place of their Lord, and fulfil the ministry which they had received from him. In the distribution of their labors, by mutual consent, they occupied, to a great extent, separate fields. Some went to the heathen, and others to the circumcision, Gal. 2: 7—9. But none had any prescribed field of labor, bearing the remotest analogy to a modern diocese. Paul was greatly oppressed by the care of *all the churches*, which came daily upon him. Who is weak and I am not weak? Who is offended and I burn not? 2 Cor. 11: 29. So that while each may have been the apostle of particular churches, each and every one exercised a common oversight and jurisdiction over all, by whomsoever they might have been originally organized. Nor was this jurisdiction of the several apostles exercised by them on their own individual responsibility, but in common rather, as fellow-apostles and co-workers, for the building up of the church of Christ, and the extension of his kingdom. In a word, the government of the churches was vested in the apostles, not individually, but *collectively*; and each exercised his authority as a joint member of the apostolical body, who were ordained and endowed with grace to be witnesses of the gospel of our Lord in every place, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edification

of the body of Christ." Such are the views of Rothe,[41] one of the latest writers on this subject, who has set forth his sentiments with great clearness, and supported them with unequalled learning and ability. Such also are the sentiments of Chrysostom, an ancient and learned bishop. "The apostles were constituted of God rulers, not over a separate nation or city, but all were entrusted with the world."[42]

(β) Timothy at Ephesus was not a bishop.

Timothy was one of a class of religious teachers who acted as the assistants and fellow-laborers of the apostle. Their assistance was employed as a necessary expedient, to enable the apostles to exercise their supervision over the infant churches which sprang up in the different and distant countries through which Christianity was propagated. Over churches, widely separated, the apostles could personally exercise but little supervision. The great apostle of the Gentiles, had been instrumental in planting many churches in distant countries. He saw the necessity of employing suitable and competent men, who might supply his lack of service to those churches which lay beyond the range of his immediate inspection. They were neither permanent officers in the church, nor restricted to any specific circuit, but temporary residents, to assist in setting in order the churches, and giving needful instructions, as the occasion might require, and then to pass away to any other station, where their services might be required.

Such assistants and delegates of the apostles are of frequent occurrence in the Scriptures. And this view of their office affords, at once, a natural and easy explanation of the peculiar and somewhat anomalous rank which they seem to have held. Bishops they certainly were not, in the Episco-

[41] Anfänge, Christ. Kirch. I. S. 297—310.

[42] *Εἰσὶν ὑπὸ θεοῦ χειροτονηθέντες ἀπόστολοι ἄρχοντες, οὐκ ἔθνη καὶ πόλεις διαφόρους λαμβάνοντες, ἀλλὰ πάντες κοινῇ τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐμπιστευθέντες.—Cited by Campbell, Lectures*, p. 77.

copal sense of that term.[43] Neither were they merely presbyters; for, though in many respects their office was analogous to that of presbyters, in others it was widely different. Such was Timothy, whom Paul styles his fellow-laborer, *συνεργός*. Rom. 16: 21. 1 Thess. 3: 2. In the salutations of his epistles, also, he often couples the name of Timothy with his own. Phil. 1: 1. 1 Thess. 1: 1. 2 Thess. 1: 1, etc. Accordingly, Timothy appears to have been the travelling companion of the apostle.

He seems, indeed, at different times, to have had the superintendence of several churches in various places. Comp. 1 Cor. 4: 17. 1 Tim. 1: 3, and 1 Thess. 3: 2, from which it appears that he was sent to Corinth, to Ephesus, and to Thessalonica, as a fellow-laborer and assistant of the apostle. From what is said of his influence at Corinth, it would seem that he might, with almost equal propriety, be styled the bishop of that city as of Ephesus. In the first epistle, he is reputed to have been sent to them, as the representative of the apostle, to bring them into remembrance of his ways and doctrines; and, in the second, he unites with Paul as his brother in the salutation of that church. The whole history of the Acts of the Apostles, and indeed the language of the epistles proves that, like the other fellow-travellers of St. Paul, Timothy had no settled abode, no fixed station; but assisted him, as an evangelist, in setting the churches in order, and in the accomplishment of any special object which the apostle had in view, and to which he could not personally attend. The apostle, often coupling the name of Timothy with his own, presents him to us as his companion and assistant. This itinerating life of Timothy sufficiently proves that he was not the bishop of Ephesus. When both the epistles to the Thessalonians were written, A. D. 62, Timothy was with Paul at Corinth, having lately returned from

[43] Bishop Onderdonk only claims this distinction for Timothy, and many others of that communion give up this point.

Thessalonica, where he had spent some time in ministering to that church.

When Paul wrote the first epistle to the Corinthians, A. D. 57, from Ephesus, Timothy was absent again, on a mission to Macedonia and Achaia, from whence he was expected soon to return. 1 Cor. 16: 10. Titus also went about this time on a mission to Corinth.

The year following, when Paul wrote his second epistle from Macedonia, Timothy was with him there, and Titus, whom Paul had met in Macedonia, was again one of the messengers by whom the letter was forwarded to the church.

Some months later, A. D. 58, when he wrote his epistle to the Romans from Corinth, Timothy was with him there.

The epistle to the Ephesians was written from Rome, A. D. 61, subsequently to the time when Timothy is alleged to have been made bishop of Ephesus; yet he is not named in it, nor is there any allusion in it to any head of the church there. The address is only to "the saints and faithful brethren." Indeed, it is certain, from the epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon, written about the same time from Rome, that Timothy was, at this time, in that city; so that he could scarcely have been in his supposed diocese at all.

"The expression in 1 Tim. 1: 3, 'As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus when I went into Macedonia,' seems to mark but a temporary purpose, and to bear little similitude to a settled appointment and establishment of him as head of the church there, *i. e.* bishop, in the modern acceptation of the term, resembling rather his previous mission to Thessalonica, referred to in the epistle to the Thessalonians (3: 2); and this is confirmed by the undoubted fact, that when the second epistle to him was written, not only was Timothy not in his supposed diocese at Ephesus, but the apostle tells him that he had sent Tychicus there, who is spoken of by the apostle as being in like manner a fellow-servant, beloved brother, and fellow minister of the Lord (Ephes. 6: 21), as

Timothy himself was. This we know to have been shortly before the death of the apostle."[44] The absurdity of supposing that this request was made to Timothy as bishop, is forcibly presented by Daillé. "Why *beseech* a bishop to remain in his diocese? Is it not to beseech a man to stay in a place to which he is bound? I should not think it strange to beseech him to leave it, if his services were needed elsewhere. But to beseech him to abide in a place where his charge obliges him to be, and which he cannot forsake without offending God and neglecting his duty, is, to say the truth, not a very civil entreaty; as it plainly pre-supposes that he has not his duty much at heart, seeing one is under the necessity of *beseeching* him to do it."[45]

By the imposition of hands he was endowed with peculiar gifts, which qualified him to serve the churches as a fellow-laborer with the apostle, who accordingly charges him not to neglect this gift.[46]

But what need of many words on this subject? The apostle, just before his death, and long after he is supposed to have constituted Timothy bishop at Ephesus, gives him his true designation,—an Evangelist, "Do the work," not of bishop, but "of an evangelist." The work which he was exhorted to do was simply that of a "person who, being attached to no particular church, was sent by the apostle as was necessary, either for the purpose of founding new churches, or of confirming those which were already established."[47]

[44] Bowdler's Letters on Apost. Succession, pp. 25, 26.

[45] Daillé, *ci-dessus*, p. 23. Cited in Mason's Works, Vol. III. p. 197.

[46] Comp. Neander, Apost. Kirch. 1. c. 10. Rothe, Anfänge, I. S. 160, 161, and 263; also, J. H. Böhmer, Diss. Jur. Eccl. Antiq. p. 424 seq., where is given an able discussion of the points under consideration, in relation to Timothy, Titus, and the angel of the churches. Barnes's Apost. Church, pp. 99—107, and Smyth's Presbytery and Prelacy, chap. 12. § 3.

[47] Beausobre, quoted by Mant and d'Ogly, on Acts 21: 8.

(γ) Titus was not bishop of Crete.

Like Timothy, Titus was an evangelist. He received similar instructions and performed similar labors. Like Timothy, he also travelled too much to be regarded as having been a stationary prelate. From Syria we trace him to Jerusalem; thence to Corinth; thence to Macedonia; back again to Corinth; thence to Crete; thence to Dalmatia; and whether he ever returned to Crete is wholly uncertain. He was left at Crete, therefore, not as bishop of that diocese, but as an assistant of the apostle, to establish the churches, and to continue the work which the apostle had begun. "After Paul had laid the foundation of the Christian church in Crete," says Neander, "he left Titus behind, to complete the organization of the churches, to confirm the new converts in purity of doctrine, and to counterwork the influence of the false teachers."[48]

From all this there appears to be no scriptural foundation for considering Timothy to have been established as bishop of Ephesus, or Titus as bishop of Crete. Dr. Whitby, himself a zealous advocate of Episcopacy, assures us that he could find *nothing in any writer of the first three centuries concerning the Episcopate of Timothy and Titus; nor any intimation that they bore the name of bishops.* "Certain it is," says Campbell, also, "that in the first three centuries, neither Timothy nor Titus is styled bishop by any writer." Titus journeyed much with Paul, and was left in Crete, like Timothy at Ephesus, to render in behalf of the apostles, a a similar service to the churches on that island.

Of the same general character, also, was Silvanus, 1 Thess. 1: 1. 2 Thess. 1: 1. Comp. 1 Pet. 5: 12; and Mark, Col. 4: 10. 1 Pet. 5: 13; and Clemens, Phil. 4: 3, and several others. Silas is first the companion of Paul and Barnabas in Asia Minor; then of Paul, in his second missionary tour through Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Achaia; and, at a

[48] Apost. Kirch. Vol. I. p. 405.

later period, of Peter in the Parthian empire. Mark, too, was first the companion of Paul and Barnabas; then, after their separation, of Barnabas in Cyprus; and afterwards of Peter in the Parthian empire, from whence, also, they journeyed in company to Rome.

No one of the apostles, therefore, nor Timothy, nor Titus, nor any of the evangelists, acted in the capacity of bishop of any church or diocese. In neither has this higher order any representation; from the office of neither can any argument be derived in support of the prelatical doctrine of Episcopal supremacy and apostolical succession.[49]

(δ) The angel of the church in the apocalyptic epistles was not a bishop.

On this subject, we shall present the reader with the exposition of several distinguished scholars, and submit it to him, whether this phraseology supports the prelatical claims of Episcopacy. The views of Neander are briefly given in his Introduction.[50]

By the kindness of Prof. Stuart, we here offer the following exposition from his unpublished commentary on The Revelation:

"The seven angels have given occasion to much speculation and diversity of opinion. Are they *teachers, bishops,* overseers? or is some other office designated by the word *ἄγγελος*, angel, here?

1. "Old Testament usage; *viz.* the later Hebrew employs the word מַלְאָךְ=*ἄγγελος*, to designate a prophet. Hag. 1: 13, also a priest. Mal. 2: 7, and Eccl. 5: 6. As priests, in the appropriate sense of the word, did not exist in the Christian churches (for they had no Mosaic ritual of sacrifices and oblations), so we must compare *ἄγγελος* here with מַלְאָךְ, prophet, in Hag. 1: 13. *Προφῆται*, prophets, there were in the Christian church. See 1 Cor. 12: 28. Acts 13:

[49] Comp. Rothe, Anfänge, I. S. 305 seq. [50] Page 21.

1. 1 Cor. 14: 29, 32, 37. Eph. 2: 20. 3: 5. 4: 11. Taken in this sense, the word designates here the leading teacher in the Asiatic churches. The nature of the case would seem to indicate a *leader* here, else why should he be especially addressed as the representative of the whole body in each of the Christian churches? But,

2. "Another exposition has been given. Vitringa[51] has compared the ἄγγελος of the apocalypse with the שְׁלִיחַ צִבּוּר of the Jewish synagogues, which means *legatus ecclesiae* [*the representative or delegate of the church*], and compares well with ἄγγελος ἐκκλησίας [*angel of the church*], as to the form of the phrase. The office of the individual thus named was to superintend and conduct the worship of the synagogue; *i. e.* he recited prayers, and read the Scriptures, or invited others to perform these duties; he called on the priests to pronounce the final benediction, in case he himself was not a priest; he proclaimed the sacred feasts, and, in a word, he superintended the whole concerns of religious worship, and evidently took the lead in them himself. He was a προεστώς, or an ἐπίσκοπος [a *superintendent* or *overseer*], and also a διδάσκαλος, *teacher*, in a greater or less degree. Comp. John 3: 10. The best account of his office is in Schoettgen, Horae Heb. p. 1089 seq., who has pointed out some errors and deficiencies of Vitringa. The nature of the case shows that the superior officer is, in this instance, and should be, addressed. He is probably called the angel of the church, in conformity to the Hebrew Chaldee שְׁלִיחַ צִבּוּר (possibly in reference to Hag. 1: 13, or Mal. 2: 7), and may be called *legatus ecclesiae*, because he is *delegatus ab ecclesia* [delegated by the church], in order that he may render their public devotions to God, and superintend their social worship. Exactly the limits of the office and its spe-

[51] De Vet. Synagoga. p. 910 seq. As an interpretation of the Hebrew phrase, שְׁלִיחַ צִבּוּר, the English reader may read, as often as it occurs, *the ruler of the synagogue*.

cific duties neither the word, ἄγγελος, explains, nor does the context give us any particular information."

The learned Origen affirms, that the angels of the churches were the προεστῶτες, the presiding presbyters, the same of whom Justin, Tertullian, and Clemens Alexandrinus speak, in the extracts which are given below, in their order.[52]

The exposition given below is from the learned Dr. Delitzsch, of Leipsic, the associate of Dr. Fürst, in preparing his Hebrew Concordance. The writer is himself a man of profound erudition in all that relates to Hebrew and Rabbinical literature, and has furnished the article for us at our particular request.

"The ἄγγελοι τῆς ἐκκλησίας, *angels of the churches*, are the bishops; or, what in my opinion is the same in the apostolical churches, the presbyters of the churches. The expression, like many others in the New Testament, is derived from the synagogue, which may be regarded as the parent source of the Christian church, having remained essentially unchanged for a long time after the overthrow of the temple service. The office of the שְׁלִיחַ צִבּוּר corresponds entirely with that of bishop or presbyter of the apostolical churches.

1. "The שְׁלִיחַ צִבּוּר bears this name as the *delegatus ecclesiae*, the delegate of the church, who was elected by them to exercise and enjoy the privileges and prerogatives of a presiding officer in their assemblies. It was his duty to pray in the name of the assembly, to lead in the reading of the Scriptures, to blow the trumpet, the שׁוֹפָר, on the opening of a new year; and, in the absence of those who belonged to the priesthood, the כֹּהֲנִים, to pronounce the Aaronitic benediction. So far as the performance of this rite is concerned, the priests themselves are the שְׁלִיחֵי צִבּוּר.

[52] *Προεστώτας τινὰς τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν ἀγγέλους λέγεσθαι παρὰ τῷ Ἰωάννῃ ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει.—De Orat.* § 34.

The original passages are given by Schoettgen.[53] So high and important was the office of this שְׁלִיחַ צִבּוּר, and so nearly did it correspond with that of bishop or presbyter, that the name of the former might be applied to the latter.

"The signification of the term may also be learned from the Aramaean term, the קְרוֹבָא. This officer of the synagogue, the שְׁלִיחַ צִבּוּר, was regarded as bringing before God the prayers of the people, which were considered as their spiritual offerings. It appears from the Jerusalem Talmud, that when one was invited to ascend the pulpit to offer public prayers, the language of the invitation was not 'Come and pray,' but 'Come hither, and present our offering,' עֲשֵׂה קָרְבָּנֵינוּ.[54]

"The office of the שְׁלִיחַ צִבּוּר did not, indeed, include the duty of a public teacher; for the office of public preaching was not established as a permanent institution, but had its origin within the period of the Christian dispensation.

"I have thus shown that the appellation, ***angel of the church***, was used to designate the presiding officer of the Christian church, with particular reference to the שְׁלִיחַ צִבּוּר, of the synagogue. Still, as a name of an office, the angel of the church may have a meaning somewhat higher. Such a meaning it may have, with reference, retrospectively, to the מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה of the Old Testament.[55] So that the angel of the church may, at the same time, denote the bishop or presbyter chosen by this Christian community, to be the messenger, or servant, both of God and of the church. This call of the church is itself a ***vocatio divina***, a ***divine calling***; and, according to the New Testament view of the subject, unites the idea of both offices in the same person."

Bengel, also, the most learned expositor of the book of

[53] Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae ad Apoc. 1. p. 1089 seq.

[54] Berachot, c. 4. f. 206. Comp. Zunz, Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden.

[55] Comp. Malachi 2: 7, and Haggai 1: 13.

Revelation, is of opinion, that the angel of the church corresponds to the שְׁלִיחַ צִבּוּר, of the synagogue. "The Hebrews had, in their synagogue, a שְׁלִיחַ צִבּוּר a *deputatum ecclesiae*, who, in reading, in prayer, etc., led the congregation; and such a leader, also, had each of the seven churches of the Apocalypse."[56]

The result is, that the angel of the churches, whatever view we take of the origin of the term, was not the representative of an order or grade superior to presbyters, but was himself merely a presbyter; or, if you please, *a bishop*,—provided you mean by it simply what the Scriptures always mean,—the pastor of a church, the ordinary and only minister. The New Testament never recognizes more than one church in a city. This fact of itself precludes the supposition that the angel of the church could have been a diocesan having in the same city several churches under his authority.

II. It remains to consider the historical argument for the original equality and identity of bishops and presbyters.

This equality and identity was fully recognized in the early church, and continued to be acknowledged as an historical fact, even after the establishment of the hierarchy, down to the time of the Reformation. The historical argument comprised in this proposition may be resolved into several particulars, each of which serves to show that both the early fathers and later historians regarded presbyters and bishops as belonging originally to the same grade or order of the clergy, and as being equal in their rights and privileges.

1. Presbyters are designated by names and titles similar to those of bishops.

[56] Erklärte Offenbarung, S. 216. For a further illustration of the opinions of the learned, the reader is referred to Campbell's Lectures on Eccl. Hist. pp. 82—88. Whately, Kingdom of Christ. pp. 246—250.

2. Presbyters, like bishops, are carefully distinguished from the deacons, the *second order* of the clergy; and in such a manner as to show that both presbyters and bishops are indiscriminately and equally the representatives of the first order.

3. Presbyters were understood to possess the right to ordain; and, generally, to perform all the functions of the Episcopal office.

4. Bishops, themselves, in their ministerial character, exercised only the jurisdiction, and performed merely the offices, of presbyters in the primitive churches.

5. The original equality of bishops and presbyters continued to be acknowledged, from the rise of the Episcopal hierarchy down to the time of the Reformation.

1. Presbyters are designated in the writings of the early fathers by names and titles similar to those of bishops.

When from the Scriptures we turn to the writings of these fathers, it is observable that they speak sometimes of bishops and sometimes of presbyters as the presiding officers of the church, and then again of both indiscriminately, as being one and the same in rank. To both they ascribe the same or similar names and titles, such as seniors, elders, chairmen, moderators, presidents, etc., all indicating identity of office, and equality in rank. Even when the first place is assigned to the bishop, he is only chief among equals, just as in a modern presbytery or association, one is promoted to the office of moderator, to which all are alike eligible.[57]

2. Presbyters, like bishops, are carefully distinguished from the deacons, the second order of the clergy and in such a manner as to show that both presbyters and bishops are indiscriminately and equally the representatives of the first order.

[57] We have brought together in parallel columns some of the names and titles which are ascribed to bishops and presbyters sever-

Several of the earliest fathers distinctly recognize but two orders of the priesthood. Those of the first order are sometimes denominated presbyters, sometimes bishops, and then again bishops and presbyters indiscriminately. It is worthy of particular notice, that while bishops and presbyters are confounded one with another, they are uniformly distinguished from the deacons, the second order of the priesthood. Whatever be the title by which the clergy of the first order

ally. The intelligent reader will readily perceive the similarity of the titles given to both, and the identity of their significations.

TITLES OF BISHOPS.	TITLES OF PRESBYTERS.
Ἐπίσκοποι, πρεσβύτεροι, πρόεδροι, προιστάμενοι, ἔφοροι ἄρχοντες ἐκκλησιῶν, προεστῶτες.	Ἐπίσκοποι,* πρεσβύτεροι,† πρόεδροι,‡ προεστῶτες,§ προϊστάται ‖
Praesides, praepositi; praesidentes, superattendentes, superintendentes, pastores, patres ecclesiae, vicarii, praesules, antistites, antistites sacrorum, seniores, etc.	Praepositi, antistites, majores natu, seniores, seniores plebis, sacerdotes, etc.

These and several other titles are given in the author's Antiquities, pp. 70, 94; in Riddle, Christ. Antiq. pp. 161, 229; in Baumgarten, Erläuterungen, S. 75, 94; and in Rheinwald, S. 30, 45. Obviously the titles of both are synonymous, and are applied indiscriminately to both bishops and presbyters, to denote one and the same office. Riddle, Christ. Antiq. p. 230. Blondell justly remarks, that "the use of such terms creates no difficulty, and for the reason that, even after a distinction was made between bishops and presbyters in the second century by the decision of the churches, both continued to be distinguished indiscriminately by the same appellation."—*Apologia pro Hieron.* p. 92.

Riddle also allows "that the terms, ἐπίσκοπος and πρεσβύτερος, in the New Testament are synonymous, and denote one and the same office;" and cites several passages, to some of which reference is made above.

* Chrysost. Hom. 1. in Phil. I. p. 8. Hom. 2. in 1 Tim. 3. Theodoret, in Phil. 1: 1. 2: 25. Jerome, ad Tit. 1. and Ep. 83, 85.

† Greg. Naz. Orat. I. Basil, Reg. Morali, 71.

‡ Synesius Ep. 12.

§ Greg. Naz. Orat. I. Basil, M. Regula Morali.

‖ Chrysost. Hom. 11, in 1 Tim. 4. Comp. Rom. 12: 8.

are called, we are in no danger of mistaking them for the second.

Clement of Rome, who wrote about A. D. 96, is our first authority. His epistle addressed to the Corinthians, is the earliest and most authentic of all the writings of the apostolical fathers. It was held in such esteem by the early Christians, that it was publicly read in their religious assemblies, in the same manner as the apostolical epistles.[58] And, by ecclesiastical writers generally, nothing that is not divine is admitted to be of higher authority. This revered father recognizes but *two orders* of the priesthood, *bishops* and *deacons*, ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους. He gives not the least intimation of the existence of an individual diocesan bishop at Corinth; but uniformly speaks of the presbyters of that church, whom the Corinthians had rejected, as belonging to the highest order. "The apostles preaching in countries and cities, appointed the first fruits of their labors to be *bishops* and *deacons*, having proved them by the Spirit."[59] These are the two orders of the ministry, as originally appointed by the apostles. "It were a grievous sin," he proceeds to say, "to reject those who have faithfully fulfilled the duties of their *Episcopal office*," and immediately adds, "blessed are those *presbyters*, who have finished their course and entered upon their reward,"[60] *i. e.*, blessed are those *presbyters* who have thus faithfully performed the duties of *their Episcopal office;* bishops and presbyters being used interchangeably as equally descriptive of the same order. This passage establishes the identity of bishops and presby-

[58] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 3. c. 13.

[59] *Κατὰ χώρας οὖν καὶ πόλεις κηρύσσοντες καθίστανον τὰς ἀπαρχὰς αὐτῶν, δοκιμάσαντες τῷ πνεύματι, εἰς ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους τῶν μελλόντων πιστεύειν.—Epist. ad Cor.* § 42. p. 57.

[60] *Ἁμαρτία γὰρ οὐ μικρὰ ἡμῖν ἔσται, ἐὰν τοὺς ἀμέμπτως καὶ ὁσίως προσενέγκοντας τὰ δῶρα τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ἀποβάλωμεν. Μακάριοι οἱ προοδοιπορήσαντες πρεσβύτεροι, οἵτινες ἔγκαρπον καὶ τελείαν ἔσχον τὴν ἀνάλυσιν.—Epist. ad Cor.* § 44. p. 58.

ters in the opinion of this venerable author, who may be understood to express the prevailing opinion both at Rome and at Corinth. The epistle proceeds on the evident assumption, that both held the same ministerial office, and sustained the same relations to the people. He is remonstrating with the Corinthians for expelling certain presbyters from their *bishopric*, *ἀπὸ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς*. "Clement himself," says Riddle, "was not even aware of the distinction between bishops and presbyters—terms which in fact he uses as synonymous."[61]

Polycarp is our next witness. This father was familiar with those who had seen our Lord. He was the disciple of John the apostle, and is supposed by many to be the angel of the church at Smyrna, in Rev. 2: 8. Such was the respect in which his epistle was held by the primitive Christians, that it was publicly read in their churches until the fourth century. This valuable relic of antiquity, the date of which is usually assigned to the year 140, harmonizes in a remarkable degree with that of Clement, in recognizing but two orders of the clergy.[62] The first it denominates *presbyters*. Bishops are not once named in all the epistle. These presbyters are represented as the inspectors and rulers of the church, having authority to administer its discipline, and to exercise all the functions of its highest officers. Nor is there the least intimation that any one has authority superior to theirs.

As the author of the epistle, and apparently the presiding elder, the *προεστώς* of the church, Polycarp opens the letter with the usual Christian salutation to the church whom he addresses, coupled with that of his fellow-presbyters. "Polycarp and the *presbyters* with him, to the church of God dwelling at Philippi, mercy to you, and peace be multiplied

[61] Christ. Antiq. p. 5. Comp. Waddington's Church Hist., p. 35. Campbell's Lectures, p. 72.

[62] *Διὸ δέον ἀπέχεσθαι ἀπὸ πάντων τούτων ὑποτασσομένους τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις καὶ διακόνοις ὡς Θεῷ καὶ Χριστῷ.—Ad. Phil.* c. 6.

from God Almighty, and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour." Paul in his salutation addresses the *bishops* and deacons of this church. Polycarp in his, speaks only of *presbyters* and deacons. If there were three orders of clergy at Philippi, the omission of one by the apostle, and another by this apostolical father is unaccountable. The advice of Polycarp to the church "to be subject to the *presbyters* and *deacons*," becomes particularly irrelevant and improper, on the supposition, that the government of the church was vested in a *bishop*. The conclusion, therefore, is inevitable, that bishop and presbyter were still used interchangeably; and that both Paul and Polycarp speak of the same class of officers. Clement and Polycarp were contemporaries and survivors of the apostles. They resided, the one at Rome; the other, in Asia Minor. They represent distinct portions of the Christian church, remote from each other, and widely different in language, in government, and in national peculiarities. The ecclesiastical polity of these four churches may fairly be assumed as an example of the usage of others at this time. So far as we can ascertain from the writings of these fathers, no office existed in the churches either of Rome, Corinth, Smyrna, or Philippi, superior to that of presbyter; nor is there any indication of diversity of order, degree, ordination, or power, between the several presbyters or bishops of those churches; save that of senior or moderator, the *προεστώς* of their body.

It is also particularly noticeable, that Polycarp specifies the qualifications necessary both for deacons,[63] and for presbyters;[64] and, like Paul, the apostle, on a similar occasion, Tit. 1: 5—9, makes no mention of what is proper in the conduct and character of a bishop.

Justin Martyr, the Christian philosopher, who suffered martyrdom A. D. 165, two years before the death of Polycarp, offers further confirmation of these views of the sub-

[63] Ep. c. 5. [64] Ep. c. 6.

ject. A native of Samaria in Palestine and converted to Christianity at Ephesus, he travelled in Egypt and visited most of the Christian churches in every part of the Roman empire, residing also for a long time at Rome. We may therefore expect from him the most exact and certain knowledge of the doctrine and usages of the second century. We may be assured that he understood the government and worship of the church. That the information which Justin gives respecting the christian church was strictly and universally true, we have the fullest assurance from the learning, the candor and the piety of the author, and from the fact that he speaks from personal knowledge as an itinerating christian counsellor and teacher. Never himself holding any clerical office, his relations to the church, his learning, his candor, his piety, his extensive travels, and his death, all concur to render him an unexceptionable witness. In his description of public worship, after mentioning prayers and the fraternal salutation, he says,—"There is brought to him who presides over the brethren, *τῷ προεστῶτι τῶν ἀδελφῶν*, bread and a cup of water, and wine; and he, taking them, offers up praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and the Holy Ghost, and renders thanks for these, his gifts. At the close of his petition and thanksgivings, all the people present say Amen; which, in the Hebrew language, signifies *so may it be.* And he who presides, having given thanks, and the whole assembly having expressed their assent, they who are called among us deacons, *διάκονοι*, distribute the bread, and the wine, and water to each of those who are present, to partake of that which has been blessed. Also they carry to those who are not present."[65]

[65] Ἀδελφοὶ κοινὰς εὐχὰς ποιησόμενοι ὑπέρ τε ἑαυτῶν καὶ τοῦ φωτισθέντος καὶ ἄλλων πανταχοῦ πάντων εὐτόνως. —— ἀλλήλους φιλήματι ἀσπαζόμεθα παυσάμενοι τῶν εὐχῶν. ἔπειτα προσφέρεται τῷ προεστῶτι τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἄρτος καὶ ποτήριον ὕδατος καὶ

His testimony, in the passage above cited, is that two orders only officiated in their public worship and in their celebration of the eucharist. Soon after this, he again describes their mode of public worship, and of communion, and specifies the same officiating officers, the *president* of the brethren, and the *deacons*.[66] Nothing occurs, either in the narrative, or in the distinctive epithet, to indicate any higher order or office than that of the officiating presbyter who conducted their worship and administered the sacrament; or if you call him bishop, he is still of the same order, distinguished clearly from the deacons, but differing in no wise from the order of presbyters.

Upon the import of this *προεστώς*, of Justin, about which so much is said, the following remarks of Milton are worthy of particular consideration :—"Now for the word *προεστώς*, it is more likely that Timothy never knew the word in that sense. It was the vanity of those next succeeding times not to content themselves with the simplicity of Scripture phrase, but must make a new lexicon to name themselves by; one will be called *προεστώς*, or *antistes*, a word of precedence; another would be termed a gnostic, as Clemens; a third, sacerdos, or priest, and talks of altars; which was a plain sign that their doctrine began to change, for which they must change their expressions. But that place of Justin Martyr serves rather to convince the author, than to make for him, where the name *προεστὼς τῶν ἀδελφῶν*, the presi-

πράματος, καὶ οὗτος λαβὼν, αἶνον καὶ δόξαν τῷ πατρὶ τῶν ὅλων, διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου, ἀναπέμπει καὶ εὐχαριστίαν ὑπὲρ τοῦ κατηξιῶσθαι τούτων παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ πολὺ ποιεῖται. οὗ συντελέσαντος τὰς εὐχὰς καὶ τὴν εὐχαριστίαν, πᾶς ὁ παρὼν λαὸς ἐπευφημεῖ λέγων, Ἀμήν.—εὐχαριστήσαντος δὲ τοῦ προεστῶτος, καὶ ἐπευφημήσαντος παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ, οἱ καλούμενοι παρ' ἡμῖν διάκονοι, διδόασιν ἑκάστῳ τῶν παρόντων μεταλαβεῖν. —*Apol.*, 1. c. 65. p. 82. Comp. Semisch's Justin Martyr. Trans. Edinburgh 1843. Vol. I. pp. 28—9.

[66] Apol. 1. c. 67. p. 83.

dent or pastor of the brethren (for to what end is he their president but to teach them?) cannot be limited to signify a prelatical bishop, but rather communicates that Greek appellation to every ordinary presbyter; for there he tells what the Christians had wont to do in their several congregations, to read and expound, to pray and administer, all which he says the προεστώς, or *antistes* did. Are these the offices only of a bishop, or shall we think that every congregation where these things were done, which he attributes to this 'antistes,' had a bishop present among them? unless they had as many 'antistites' as presbyters, which this place rather seems to imply; and so we may infer even from their own alleged authority, 'that *antistes* was nothing else but presbyter.'"[67]

Having now passed the middle of the second century, and found, thus far, only two orders in the church, we may fairly conclude that such was the organization adopted by the apostles. This early and uniform usage is a fair exposition of their authority and example. But the evidence already adduced is corroborated by other authorities.

Irenaeus, a Greek, of Asia Minor, was in his youth a hearer of the venerable Polycarp, the disciple of John. He spent his advanced life in Gaul, at Lyons, and died about the commencement of the third century, probably A. D. 202. Speaking of Marcion, Valentinus, Cerinthus, and other heretics, he says:—"When we refer them to that apostolic tradition, which is preserved in the churches, through the succession of their *presbyters*, these men oppose the tradition; pretending that, being more wise than, not only the *presbyters*, but the apostles themselves, they have found the uncorrupted truth."[68] Continuing the same course of reasoning,

[67] Milton's Prelatical Episcopacy, Prose Works, Vol. I. p. 76.

[68] Cum autem ad eam iterum traditionem, quae est ab Apostolis, quae per successiones *Presbyterorum* in ecclesiis custoditur, provocamus eos: adversantur traditioni, dicentes, se non solum *Presbyteris*,

the author, in the next section, again styles these same presbyters, *bishops*. "We can enumerate those who were constituted by the apostles, *bishops* in the churches; their successors, also, even down to our time.—But because it would be tedious, in such a volume as this, to enumerate the successions in all the churches, showing to you the tradition and declared faith of the greatest and most ancient and noted church, founded at Rome by the two glorious apostles, Peter and Paul, which she received from the apostles, and is come to us through the successions of the bishops, we confound all who conclude otherwise than they ought, by what means soever they do so."[69]

But the very same traditions and successions, which are here ascribed to the bishops, are just above assigned also to the presbyters.

Again, treating of the churches of Smyrna and Ephesus, he speaks in a similar connection, of Polycarp, as a *bishop;* but in another place, he styles him that *blessed and apostolical presbyter*, *ἐκεῖνος ὁ μακάριος καὶ ἀποστολικὸς πρεσβύτερος*.[70]

Again, "We ought to obey those *presbyters* in the church, who have succession, as we have shown, from the apostles;

sed etiam *Apostolis* exsistentes sapientiores, sinceram invenisse veritatem.—*Irenaeus, Adv. Haer.* L. 3. c. 2. § 2. p. 175.

[69] Traditionem itaque Apostolorum in toto mundo manifestatam in omni ecclesia adest respicere omnibus, qui vera velint videre; et habemus annumerare eos, qui ab Apostolis instituti sunt *Episcopi* in ecclesiis, et successores eorum usque ad nos, qui nihil tale docuerunt, neque cognoverunt, quale ab his deliratur.—Sed quoniam valde longum est in hoc tali volumine, omnium ecclesiarum enumerare successiones, maximae et antiquissimae et omnibus cognitae, a gloriosissimis duobus Apostolis Petro et Paulo Romae fundatae et constitutae ecclesiae eam, quam habet ab Apostolis traditionem et annuntiatam hominibus fidem, per successiones *Episcoporum* pervenientem usque ad nos indicantes, confundimus omnes, etc.—*Irenaeus*, c. 3. § 1. p. 175, et § 2. ibid.

[70] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 5. c. 20.

who, with the succession of the *Episcopate*, received the certain gift of truth, according to the good pleasure of the Father."

"And truly, they who by many are regarded as *presbyters*, but serve their own pleasures, and, not having the fear of God in their hearts, but elated with the pride of their exaltation to the chief seat, commit wickedness in secret, saying, no one seeth us—they shall be convicted.—From all such we ought to withdraw, and, as we have said, to adhere to those who maintain the doctrine of the apostles, and who, with the order of the *presbytership* preserve sound doctrine and a blameless conversation for the confirmation and reproof of others."[71]

Again, he says, 'that they who cease to serve the church in the ministry, are a reproach to the sacred order of the *presbyters*;' but he had just before styled these same persons *bishops*.[72]

In his letter to the Roman bishop Victor, he speaks of

[71] Quapropter eis, qui in ecclesiis sunt, *Presbyteris* obaudire oportet, his, qui successionem habent ab Apostolis, sicut ostendimus; qui cum *Episcopatus* successione charisma veritatis certum secundum placitum Patris acceperunt, etc. After this,—Qui vero crediti quidem sunt a multis esse *Presbyteri*, serviunt autem suis voluptatibus, et non praeponunt timorem Dei in cordibus suis, sed contumeliis agunt reliquos, et *principalis consessionis* tumore elati sunt et in absconsis agunt mala, et dicunt, *nemo nos videt*, redarguentur a verbo, etc.—Ab omnibus igitur talibus absistere oportet, adhaerere vero his, qui et Apostolorum, sicut praediximus, doctrinam custodiunt, et cum *Presbyterii* ordine sermonem sanum et conversationem sine offensa praestant, ad confirmationem et correptionem ceterorum. Finally, *Τοιούτους Πρεσβυτέρους ἀνατρέφει ἡ ἐκκλησία, περὶ ὧν καὶ ὁ προφήτης φησιν· δώσω τοὺς ἄρχοντάς σου ἐν εἰρήνῃ καὶ τοὺς ἐπισκόπους ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ.*—*Irenaeus*, L. 4. c. 26. § 2, 3, 4. p. 262. § 5. p. 263.

[72] Qui ergo relinquunt praeconium ecclesiae imperitiam sanctorum *presbyterorum* arguunt, non contemplantes quanto pluris sit idiota religiosus a blasphemo et impudente sophista, L. 5. c. 20. § 2. In the preceding section, he says, Omnes enim valde posteriores sunt quam *episcopi* quibus apostoli tradiderunt ecclesias. § 1.

the *presbyters*, who had presided over the church in that city before that *bishop*. One of these bishops, the predecessors of Victor, was Anicetus, whom Polycarp endeavored in vain to persuade to "retain the usage of the *presbyters* who had preceded him."[73]

We submit the above extracts to the attention of the reader, who cannot fail to observe, that the terms, *bishop* and *presbyter* are used by this ancient father, as perfectly convertible terms. Bishops he denominates presbyters; and presbyters, bishops. In so many words he ascribes the *Episcopate* to presbyters. They unitedly constitute but one order in the priesthood. Both Justin and Irenaeus represent the churches of Asia Minor. The latter also resided for many years in the Western part of the Roman empire. The former, resided at Rome when he wrote the Apology from which the extract is taken. He travelled in the different countries where the gospel had been preached, confirming the churches, and was personally acquainted with the usages both of the Eastern and Western churches. The concurring testimony of these two witnesses shows, that as yet the Christian church universally retained the apostolical institution of two orders of the clergy.

We are not ignorant of the gloss that is given to these passages from Irenaeus, in the endeavor to defend the theory of an original distinction between bishops and presbyters. But the consideration of the Episcopal argument is foreign to our purpose. The authorities are before the reader; and of their obvious meaning, any one is competent to form an independent, unaided judgment.

Titus Flavius Clemens, commonly known as Clement of Alexandria, lived at the close of the second, and the beginning of the third century. He was at the head of the celebrated school at Alexandria, the preceptor of Origen, and

[73] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 5. c. 20.

the most learned man of his age. He speaks indeed of presbyters, bishops and deacons. After citing from the epistles various practical precepts, he proceeds to say that "numerous other precepts also, directed to select characters, have been written in the sacred books, some to *presbyters*, some to *bishops*, some to deacons, and others to widows."[74] In this enumeration he appears to have followed the order of the apostle in Tit. 1: 5—7, mentioning presbyters first. He repeatedly shows, however, that there were at that time but two orders, deacons and presbyters; having observed that in most things there are two sorts of ministry, the one, of a nobler nature than the other, and having illustrated this distinction by several other examples, he says: "Just so in the church, the presbyters are entrusted with the dignified ministry; the deacons, with the subordinate."[75] He also speaks of a *προκαθεδρία*, or first seat in the presbytery; from all which, the obvious inference is, that the bishop of this author is only the *προεστώς* of earlier writers, the presiding elder of the presbytery. Henceforth the title of *προεστώς* is seldom found in the fathers, but instead of it that of *ἐπίσκοπος*, *bishop*, constantly occurs.

In his treatise, "What rich man can be saved?" Clement relates that John, the apostle, observing a young man of singular beauty, was so struck with his appearance, that turning *to the bishop who presided over all*, he commended him to his care in the presence of the church. John after repeating the charge, is said to have returned to Ephesus, and "*this presbyter*," taking home the young man that had been committed to his care, nourished, educated, and lost him. John himself, on his return, is represented to have addressed this same *presbyter* as a bishop, "O bishop, return to us your

[74] Paedag. Lib. 3. p. 264. Comp. also Strom. Lib. 6. p. 667.

[75] *Ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, τὴν μὲν βελτιστικὴν οἱ πρεσβύτεροι σώζουσιν, εἰκόνα τὴν ὑπερτικὴν οἱ διάκονοι.*—*Strom.* Lib. 7. p. 700.

charge."[76] Here then Clement uses interchangeably the terms, bishop and presbyter, to designate the same person, and makes John address, as *bishop*, one who was, notwithstanding, a mere *presbyter*. "In this author we find a presbytery and deacons only, which is as forcible an exclusion of a third order, whether superior or intermediate, as can be reasonably expected from a writer, who had no knowledge of a third."

The account of Tertullian again, contemporary with Clement, both having died the same year, A. D. 220, harmonizes in a remarkable manner with that of Justin Martyr, as exhibited above. In describing the worship of Christian assemblies, he observes: "Certain approved elders preside who have obtained that honor, not by price, but by the evidence of their fitness."[77] Aged men never presided by virtue of their age, in ancient Christian assemblies. Besides the passage distinctly asserts that these presidents were *chosen* to their office. They administered the sacrament and fulfilled the office of the προεστώς of Justin Martyr. "We never take from the hands of others than presidents, *praesidentium*, the sacrament of the eucharist," says Tertullian.[78] The president is also denominated in the same chapter, *antistes*, a term exactly corresponding to that of προεστώς in Justin. That this president, styled also bishop, is only the presiding and officiating presbyter, is apparent from another passage in Tertullian. "The highest *priest*, who is the *bishop*, has the right of granting baptism; afterwards, the presbyters and deacons; not, however, without the authority of the bishops for the honor of the church."[79] The *highest* priest implies the existence of inferiors of the same order. What then is the

[76] Chap. 42. pp. 667, 669, vol. 7. Sanct. Pat. Op. Polemica.

[77] Praesident probati quique seniores honorem istum non pretio, sed testimonio adepti; neque enim pretio ulla res Dei constat.—*Apol.* c. 39.

[78] De Corona, c. 3. p. 102.

[79] Dandi baptismum quidem habet jus summus sacerdos qui est

bishop, but a presbyter elevated to the office of a president or moderator? That this office implies no superiority in order or rank, appears from the fact that he who held it was appointed to it, not by any scriptural or apostolical ordination or appointment, but simply for the preservation of the honor and peace of the church.

Tertullian represents another division of the church, that of Africa, in which the Episcopal government was earliest developed; but even in these churches the apostolical order had not yet been fully superseded by the hierarchy. The sum of his testimony as well as of that of all who have gone before him, is, that there was but one order in the church superior to that of deacons. The government of the church was, in his time, in a transition state. Tertullian stands, as has been justly observed, "on the boundary between two different epochs in the development of the church." Henceforth the bishop assumes more prominence; but as yet he has not begun to be acknowledged as one of an order superior to presbyters. From the days of the apostles downwards he has been one among his fellow-presbyters possessing merely that conventional distinction which belongs to any one who may be appointed the presiding officer of a body, all whose members enjoy equal rights and privileges. Whatever apostolical succession there has been thus far, has been through a line of presbyters by presbyterian ordination. The lists which Irenaeus has given of primitive bishops are only catalogues of presbyters bearing this title. The usurpation of Episcopal prerogative, the assumption by the bishops of divine right, and all those innovations whose general progress, we are soon to witness are unauthorized and anti-scriptural, and consequently are *mere nullities;* and such they must ever continue to be, notwithstanding the incredible assurance with which, by some, their canonical authority is ceaselessly

episcopus: Dehinc presbyteri et diaconi; non tamen sine episcopi auctoritate propter ecclesiae honorem.—*De Bapt.* c. 17.

asserted. General assertions however unfounded are easily made; and, when boldly made and perpetually repeated, they do sometimes ensure reception. But we know not how any man who knows what proof is, and what the evidence in the present case is, can venture on such assumptions. What if Tertullian, Clement, Irenaeus, and others, tell us of bishops? "It remains yet to be evinced out of this and the like places, which will never be, that the word bishop is otherwise taken, than in the language of St. Paul and the Acts, for an order above presbyters. We grant them bishops, we grant them worthy men, we grant them placed in several churches by the apostles, we grant that Irenaeus and Tertullian affirm this; but that they were placed in a superior order above the presbytery, show from all these words why we should grant. It is not enough to say that the apostle left this man bishop in Rome, and that other in Ephesus, but to show when they altered their own decree set down by St. Paul, and made all the presbyters underlings to one bishop."[80]

3. Presbyters were understood in the early ages of Christianity to possess the right to ordain, and generally to perform the functions of the Episcopal office.

The right of presbyters to ordain, and the validity of ordination administered by them, is a direct inference from what has already been said of their identity with bishops. Clement knows nothing of any distinction between bishops and presbyters. Polycarp knows nothing of bishops. Each specifies but two orders or grades of officers in the church, of which two deacons are one. Presbyters or bishops, of necessity form the other order, and are one and the same. Justin Martyr, again, speaks of only two grades, of which deacons form one. Irenaeus, still later, uses the titles, bishop and presbyter, as perfectly convertible terms; and Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian recognize no clear distinction between bishops and presbyters as different orders. If there-

[80] Milton's Prelatical Episcopacy, Prose Works, Vol. I. p. 85.

fore there were, in the ages immediately succeeding the apostles, but two orders in the church, if bishops and presbyters were still but different names for the same office, as they were in the churches founded by the apostles, then assuredly presbyters had the right to ordain. The ordaining power was vested in them, as the highest order of ecclesiastical officers.

We have, however, direct proof that presbyters, in the primitive church, did themselves ordain. This is found in the epistle of Firmilian from Asia Minor, to Cyprian in Carthage, A. D. 256. In explanation of the ecclesiastical polity of these churches, he says, "All power and grace is vested in the church, where the *presbyters, majores natu,* preside, who have authority to baptize, to impose hands [in the reconciling of penitents], and *to ordain.*"[81] Firmilian wrote in the Greek language, from Asia; but we have a Latin translation of his epistle in the writings of Cyprian. No one who has any acquaintance with these languages, can doubt that the *majores natu,* of the Latin is a translation of *πρεσβυτέροι,* in the original. Both the terms *πρεσβυτέροι* and *majores natu,* mean the same thing; and each may, with equal propriety, be rendered *aged men, elders, presbyters.*[82] The Episcopal hierarchy was not fully established in these Eastern churches so early as in the Western. Accordingly, we find the presbyters here in the full enjoyment still of their original right

[81] Omnis potestas et gratia in ecclesia constituta sit; ubi praesident *majores natu,* qui et baptizandi, et manum imponendi, et ordinandi, possident, potestatem.—*Cyprian, Epist.* 75. p. 145.

[82] Reeves, the translator of Justin, a churchman, who loses no opportunity of opposing sectarians, allows in his notes on the passage, *προεστώς,* etc., that this *προεστώς* of Justin, the *probati seniores* of Tertullian, the *majores natu* of Firmilian, and the *προεστῶτες πρεσβυτέροι,* or presiding presbyters of St. Paul, 1 Tim. 4: 17, were all one and the same. Now Tertullian, Cyprian, or Firmilian, the celebrated bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, and St. Paul, all mean presbyters. Their language cannot be otherwise interpreted without violence. Presbyter, says Bishop Jewell, is expounded in Latin by *major natu.*—*Smyth's Presbyt. and Prelacy,* p. 367.

to ordain. The general tenor of the letter, in connection with this passage, exhibits the popular government of the apostolical churches as yet continuing among the churches of Asia. The highest authority is vested in the members of the church, who still administer their own government. No restrictions have yet been laid upon the presbyters in the administration of the ordinances. Whatever clerical grace is essential for the right administration of baptism, of consecration, and of ordination, is still retained by the presbyters.

This authority is in perfect harmony with that of Irenaeus given above, that the succession and the *Episcopate* had come down to his day, the latter part of the second century, through a series of presbyters, who, with the Episcopate, enjoyed the rights, and exercised the prerogatives, of bishops, ordination being of course included. "This passage," says Goode, "appears to me decisive as to Irenaeus's view of the matter."[83]

To the foregoing testimonies succeeds that of the author of the Commentaries on St. Paul's Epistles, attributed by some to Ambrose, but with greater probability assigned to Hilary the Deacon, A. D. 384. "The apostle calls Timothy, created by him *a presbyter*,[84] a bishop (for the first presbyters were called bishops), that when he departed, *the*

[83] Goode's Divine Rule, Vol. II. p. 66.

[84] "Timothy is here said, we may observe, to have been ordained a *presbyter*. And I cannot but think that the passage, 1 Tim. 4: 14, is favorable to this view. For without adopting the translation which some have given of this passage, viz., 'with the laying on of hands for the office of a presbyter,' if we retain our own version, which appears to me more natural, who or what is '*the presbytery*?' Certainly not consisting altogether of the apostles, though it appears, from 2 Tim. 1: 6, that ordination was received by Timothy partly from St. Paul. But if presbyters joined in that ordination, it could not be to a higher *sacerdotal* grade or order than that of the presbyterhood. Nor is this inconsistent with his being called elsewhere an apostle, which name might be given him as one appointed to be a superintendent of a church."—*Divine Rule*, Vol. II. p. 64.

one that came next might succeed him. Moreover, in Egypt the presbyters confirm, if a bishop is not present.[85] But because the presbyters that followed began to be found unworthy to hold the primacy, the custom was altered; the Council foreseeing that not order, but merit, ought to make a bishop; and that he should be appointed by the judgment of many priests, lest an unworthy person should rashly usurp the office, and be a scandal to many."[86]

This passage, then, clearly contradicts the notion of our opponents as to the *essential* necessity by apostolical ordinance of the successional Episcopal consecration of all bishops.[87]

[85] The author of the "Quæstiones in Vet. et Nov. Test." which have been ascribed to Augustine, but are probably not his, says, "In Alexandria, and through the whole of Egypt, if there is no bishop, a presbyter *consecrates.*" (In Alexandria et per totam Ægyptum si desit Episcopus consecrat presbyter.) Where, however, one MS. reads, *confirms* (consignat). See Aug. Op, Vol. III. App., col. 93. On this subject, the 13th canon of the Council of Ancyra (in the code of the Universal Church) is also worth notice.—*Divine Rule*, ibid.

[86] Timotheum, presbyterum a se creatum, episcopum vocat, quia primi presbyteri episcopi appellabantur, ut recedente uno sequens ei succederet. Denique apud Ægyptum presbyteri consignant si præsens non sit episcopus. Sed quia cœperunt sequentes presbyteri indigni inveniri ad primatus tenendos, immutata est ratio, prospiciente Concilio, ut non ordo sed meritum crearet episcopum multorum sacerdotum judicio constitutum ne indignus temere usurparet et esset multis scandalum. Comment. in Eph 4: 11, 12. Inter Op. Ambros., ed. Ben., Vol. II. app. col 241, 242. The "*Council*" may, I suppose, be what Tertullian calls "*consessus ordinis.*"

[87] There are, also, indirect confirmatory proofs. Such, I think, is afforded by the account we have in Eusebius (vi. 29,) of the appointment of Fabianus to the bishopric of Rome, for the assembly that met to elect a bishop having fixed upon him, *placed him at once on the Episcopal throne.* (Ἀμελλήτως ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς λαβόντας αὐτὸν ἐπιθεῖναι) which seems to me irreconcilable with the notion that Episcopal consecration was essential to entitle him to the Episcopal seat; for he was installed in it without any such consecration.

A *presbyter*, it is to be observed, becomes the successor of the apostle; and the apostolical succession comes down through him, as through a bishop; plainly contradicting the notion that the grace of ordination is exclusively restricted to a succession of diocesan bishops, and establishing, in the opinion of this author, the validity of presbyterian ordination. To this effect is the same author. "After the bishop, the apostle has subjoined the ordination (order) of the deaconship. Why; but that the ordination (order) of a bishop and presbyter is one and the same? For each is a priest; but the bishop is chief; so that every bishop is a presbyter, but not every presbyter a bishop. *For he is bishop who is chief among the presbyters.* Moreover, he notices that Timothy was ordained a presbyter, but *inasmuch as he had no other above him, he was a bishop.*" Hence he shows that Timothy, a *presbyter*, might ordain a *bishop*, because of his equality with him. "For it was neither lawful nor right for an inferior to ordain a superior, inasmuch as one cannot confer what he has not received."[88]

There is another passage which is in striking coincidence with the foregoing, and is probably from the same author, though found in an appendix to the works of Augustine. "That by presbyter is meant a bishop, the apostle Paul proves, when he instructs Timothy whom he had ordained a presbyter, respecting the character of one whom he would make a bishop. For what else is the bishop than the *first*

[88] Post Episcopum tamen Diaconi ordinationem subjicit. Quare? nisi quia Episcopi et Presbyteri una ordinatio est? Uterque enim sacerdos est, sed Episcopus primus est; ut omnis Episcopus Presbyter sit, non omnis Presbyter Episcopus; hic enim Episcopus est, qui inter Presbyteros primus est. Denique Timotheum Presbyterum ordinatum significat; sed quia ante se alterum non habebat, Episcopus erat. Unde et quemadmodum Episcopum ordinet ostendit. Neque enim fas erat aut licebat, ut inferior ordinaret majorem; nemo enim tribuit quod non accepit.—*Comment. in* 1 *Tim.* 3: 8, *inter Ambros. Op. Vol. II. app.* 295.

presbyter, that is, the highest priest? For he [the bishop] calls them [the presbyters] by no other name than *fellow-presbyters* and *fellow-priests*. He therefore considers them of the same grade as himself." But he is careful by no means to do the same with regard to clerical persons of inferior rank. Not even with the deacons, for to place himself in the same category with them would be degrading his own rank. "Does the bishop call the *deacons* his *fellow-deacons?* Certainly not; because they are far inferior to him, and it were a disgrace to call the *judge a mere manager of a clerk's office.*" If any are disposed to call in question this interpretation of the phrase, *judicem dicere primicerium*, I will only say that it was given to me by Prof. Rothe of Heidelberg, with whose name the reader has already become familiar, by the frequent references to his learned work on the Origin of the Christian Church. The following is also his exposition of the passage. "Where there is a real difference of office and rank, the *higher officer* cannot include himself in the official designation of the *lower*, without degrading himself. It would be a downright insult, to address the president of a court as the head of his clerks. Just so it does not enter the mind of the bishop to call his deacons, *fellow-deacons*,—making himself thereby a deacon. Between these two officers there exists an actual difference in rank. On the other hand, he calls the presbyters his *fellow-presbyters*, because he sees no real difference between his office and theirs, but only a difference *in degree;* that is, he considers himself, in relation to the presbyters, as only *primus inter pares*, chief among equals. The offices of bishop and presbyter therefore are essentially one and the same; the very thing which Ambrosiaster wishes to prove. 'For in Alexandria and throughout all Egypt, upon the decease of the bishop, the presbyter confirms (*consignat*).'"[89]

[89] Presbyterum autem intelligi Episcopum probat Paulus Aposto-

Here the presbyter performs another of the Episcopal functions,—administering the rite, not only of ordination but of *confirmation.*[90]

The full sacerdotal power is possessed by every presbyter, according to the authority of the earliest fathers. The apostolical fathers know no distinction between bishops and presbyters; and later ones make no difference in their *order* or *grade* of rank. The distinction of bishop is only a conventional arrangement made for mutual convenience, but in no wise incapacitating the presbyter for the performance of any of his sacerdotal offices. The right to ordain still belongs to him; and the bishop, when selected to preside over his fellow-presbyters, receives no new consecration or ordination, but continues himself to ordain *as a presbyter.*

Such is a plain statement of this controverted point, and such the exposition which many Episcopal writers, even at the present day give of this subject. But if the delusive doctrine of divine right and apostolical succession be given up, the validity of presbyterian ordination is of course conceded. Such Episcopalians, therefore, themselves afford us the fullest refutation of the absurd and arrogant pretensions of high-church Episcopacy.

lus, quando Timotheum, quem ordinavit Presbyterum instruit, qualum debeat creare Episcopum. Quid est enim Episcopus nisi primus Presbyter, hoc est summus sacerdos? Denique non aliter quam Compresbyteros, Condiaconos suos dicit Episcopus? Non utique, quia multo inferiores sunt, et turpe est, iudicem dicere primicerium.—*Augustin. Op Vol. III. app. p. 77. Quaestiones in Veteris et Nov. Test. ex utroqua mixtim, ed. Bened. Antwerp,* 1700—3

[90] Whether the verb *consignare* expresses the confirmation of the baptized, or the imposition of hands upon those who were ordained, or on penitents, the work expressed by it was correctly accomplished by presbyters, in the absence of the bishop, whose precedence was founded only on custom, and the canons of the church. But these could not have legalized such acts of the presbyter had not his authority been apostolical. He was therefore duly authorized to perform the functions of the Episcopal office.

We have next the authority of Jerome, who died A. D. 426. He was one of the most learned of the Latin fathers. Erasmus styles him "by far the most learned and most eloquent of all the Christians, and the prince of Christian divines." Jerome received his education at Rome, and was familiar with the Roman, Greek, and Hebrew languages. He visited Egypt, and travelled extensively in France and the adjacent countries. He resided, in the course of his life, at Constantinople, at Antioch, at Jerusalem, and at Bethlehem. By his great learning, and his extensive acquaintance with all that related to the doctrines and usages both of the Eastern and of the Western churches, he was eminently qualified to explain the rights and prerogatives of the priesthood.

But does Jerome testify to the right of presbyters to ordain? "What does a bishop," says he, "ordination excepted, that a presbyter may not do?"[91] This, however, is said of the relations of bishop and presbyter *as they then were.* This restriction of the right of ordaining to the bishops alone was a recent innovation, which had begun to distinguish them from the presbyters, and to subvert the original organization of the church. But it was an acknowledged fact, in his day, that the bishops had no authority from Christ or his apostles for their unwarrantable assumptions. "As the presbyters know that it is by the *custom of the church* that they are subject to him who is placed over them, so let the bishops know that they are above presbyters rather by the custom of the church than by the fact of our Lord's appointment, and that they (both bishops and presbyters) ought to rule the church in common, in imitation of the example of Moses."[92]

[91] Quid enim facit, excepta ordinatione, Episcopus, quod presbyter non faciat?—*Ep. ad Evang. Ep.* 101 alias 85. *Op. Ed. Paris*, 1693—1706, p. 862.

[92] Comment. in Epist. ad Titus, c. 1. v. 5. Op. Vol. IV. Paris, 1693—1706, p. 413.

He reviews the same subject with great point in his famous epistle to Evagrius, or, more properly in modern editions, to Evangelus. He rebukes with great severity certain persons who had preferred deacons in honor "above *presbyters*, i. e., *bishops*." Having thus asserted the identity of bishops and presbyters, he goes on to prove his position from Phil. 1: 1; from Acts 20: 17, 28; from Titus 1: 5; from 1 Tim. 4: 14; and from 1 Pet. 5: 1. "Does the testimony of these men seem of small account to you?" hé proceeds to say, "then clangs the gospel trumpet,—that son of thunder whom Jesus so much loved, and who drank at the fountain of truth from the Saviour's breast. 'The *presbyter* to the elect lady and her children.' 2 John 1: 1; and in another epistle, 'The *presbyter* to the well-beloved Gaius.' 3 John 1: 1."

"As to the fact, that AFTERWARDS, one was ELECTED to preside over the rest, this was done as a remedy against schism; lest every one drawing his proselytes to himself should rend the church of Christ. For even at Alexandria, from the evangelist Mark to the bishops Heraclas and Dionysius, the presbyters always chose one of their number, placed him in a superior station, and gave him the title of bishop; in the same manner as if an army should MAKE an emperor; or the deacons should choose from among themselves one whom they knew to be particularly active, and should call him ARCH-DEACON. For, excepting ordination, what is done by a bishop, which may not be done by a presbyter."[93]

[93] Sicut ergo Presbyteri sciunt, se ex Ecclesiae consuetudine ei, qui sibi praepositus fuerit, esse subiectos, ita Episcopi noverint, se magis consuetudine quam dispositionis Dominicae veritate Presbyteris esse maiores, et in commune debere Ecclesiam regere, imitantes Moysen, qui cum haberet in potestate solus praeesse populo Israel, septuaginta elegit, cum quibus populum iudicaret. Audio quendam in tantam erupisse vecordiam, ut Diaconos Presbyteris, id est Episcopis, anteferret. Nam cum Apostolus perspicue doceat, eosdem esse Presbyteros quos Episcopos, quid patitur mensarum et viduarum min-

Here the presbyters themselves elect one of their number and make him a bishop, so that even the bishop is ordained by the presbyters, if indeed it can be called an *ordination;* if not, then he is only a presbyter still, having no other right to ordain than they themselves have. Such, Jerome

ister, ut supra eos se tumidus efferat, ad quorum preces Christi corpus sanguisque conficitur? Quaeris auctoritatem? Audi testimonium. *Paulus et Timotheus, servi Iesu Christi, omnibus sanctis in Christo Iesu, qui sunt Philippis, cum Episcopis et Diaconis.* Vis et aliud exemplum? In Actibus Apostolorum ad unius Ecclesiae sacerdotes ita Paulus loquitur: *Attendite vobis et cuncto gregi, in quo vos Spiritus Sanctus posuit Episcopos, ut regeretis Ecclesiam Domini, quam acquisivit sanguine suo.* Ac ne quis contentiose in una Ecclesia plures Episcopos fuisse contendat, audi et aliud testimonium, in quo manifestissime comprobatur, eundem esse Episcopum atque Presbyterum. *Propter hoc reliqui te in Creta, ut, quae deerant, corrigeres, et constitueres Presbyteros per civitates, sicut et ego tibi mandavi. Si quis est sine crimine, unius uxoris vir, filios habens fideles, non in accusatione luxuriae, aut non subditos. Oportet enim Episcopum sine crimine esse, quasi Dei dispensatorem.* Et ad Timotheum: *Noli negligere gratiam, quae in te est, quae tibi data est prophetae, per impositionem manuum Presbyterii.* Sed et Petrus in prima epistola: *Presbyteros,* inquit, *in vobis precor compresbyter et testis passionum Christi et futurae gloriae, quae revelanda est, particeps, regere gregem Christi, et inspicere non ex necessitate, sed voluntarie iuxta Deum.* Quod quidem graece significantius dicitur ἐπισκοποῦντες, id est superintendentes, unde et nomen Episcopi tractum est. Parva tibi videntur tantorum vivorum testimonia? Clangat tuba evangelica, filius tonitrui, quem Iesus amavit plurimum, qui de pectore salvatoris doctrinarum fluenta potavit: *Presbyter Electae Dominae et filiis eius, quos ego diligo in veritate.* Et in alia epistola: *Presbyter Caio Carissimo, quem ego diligo in veritate.* Quod autem postea unus electus est, qui ceteris praeponeretur, in schismatis remedium factum est, ne unusquisque ad se trahens Christi Ecclesiam rumperet. Nam Alexandriae a Marco Evangelista usque ad Heraclam et Dionysium Episcopos Presbyteri semper unum ex se electum in excelsiori gradu collocatum Episcopum nominabant, quomodo si exercitus Imperatorem faciat, aut Diaconi eligant de se quem industrium noverint et Archidiaconum vocent. Quid enim facit excepta ordinatione Episcopus, quod Presbyter non faciat?—*Ep. ad Evang.* 101 alias 85. p. 802.

assures us, is the usage "*in every country*." There was but one ordination for bishops and presbyters in his time, though bishops had now begun exclusively to administer it. But we have a stream of testimonies coming down to us from the time of the apostles, that it had been the custom of the church from the beginning, for bishops and presbyters to receive the same ordination. This is another consideration of much importance, to show that presbyters were entitled to ordain. Having themselves received Episcopal ordination, as truly as the bishops, they were equally qualified to administer the same.

But Jerome himself attributes to presbyters the original right of ordination. "Priests who baptize, and administer the eucharist, anoint with oil, impose hands, instruct catechumens, constitute Levites and others priests, have less reason to take offence at us, explaining these things, or at the prophets foretelling them, than to ask of the Lord forgiveness."

The relevancy of this passage depends upon the question who are the *sacerdotes*, priests, of whom Jerome speaks. He is commenting upon Zephaniah 3: 3. Her *princes* within her, are roaring lions, by which he understands her *priests*, saying, "I am aware, that I shall offend many because I interpret these things as said of bishops and presbyters."[94] Then, after remarking, at length, upon this degenerate priesthood, he adds the sentence above. Jerome, therefore, ascribes to presbyters and bishops alike, the same right to constitute "Levites and others priests," applying the terms, not

[94] Scio offensurum me esse plurimos quod super episcopis et presbyteris hæc interpreter. . . . Sacerdotes qui dant baptismum et ad eucharistiam Domini uniprecantur adventum, faciunt oleum chrismatis, manus imponunt, catechumenos erudiunt, Levitas et alios constituunt sacerdotes, non tam indignentur nobis hæc exponentibus et prophetis vaticinantibus, quam Dominum deprecentur.—*Tom.* 3. pp. 1672, 1673.

to the Jewish priesthood, but to the clergy of the Christian church in his day, and including both bishops and presbyters under the same category, as possessing equal rights to baptize, to ordain, and to administer the sacraments.

That the right of ordination belonged to presbyters, is evident from the authority of Eutychius, of Alexandria, the most distinguished writer among the Arabian Christians of the tenth century. His authority confirms the testimony of Jerome, while it illustrates more clearly the usage of the church in Egypt. The citation with the translation is from Goode. This author with reference to Eutychius says, "His words are these; after mentioning that Mark the Evangelist went and preached at Alexandria, and appointed Hananias the first patriarch there, he adds: 'Moreover he appointed twelve presbyters with Hananias, who were to remain with the Patriarch, so that, when the Patriarchate was vacant, they might elect one of the twelve presbyters, upon whose head the other eleven might place their hands and bless him [or, invoke a blessing upon him], and create him Patriarch, and then choose some excellent man and appoint him presbyter with themselves in the place of him who was thus made Patriarch, that thus there might always be twelve. Nor did this custom respecting the presbyters, namely, that they should create their Patriarchs from the twelve presbyters, cease at Alexandria until the times of Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria, who was of the number of the 318 [bishops at Nice]. But he forbade the presbyters to create the Patriarch for the future, and decreed that when the Patriarch was dead, the bishops should meet together and ordain the Patriarch. Moreover he decreed that on a vacancy of the Patriarchate they should elect, either from any part of the country, or from those twelve presbyters, or others, as circumstances might prescribe, some excellent man and create him Patriarch. And thus that ancient custom by which the Patriarch used to be created by the presbyters dis-

appeared, and in its place succeeded the ordinance for the creation of the Patriarch by the bishops.'[95]

"I have given this passage in full, because it has been sometimes replied that it referred only to the *election* of the Patriarch, and that we must suppose that he was afterwards consecrated to his office by bishops. But it is evident to any one who takes the whole passage together, that such an explanation is altogether inadmissible; and moreover, the very same word (which, following Selden, we have translated *created*) is used with respect to the act of the presbyters, as is afterwards used with respect to the act of the bishops in the appointment.

"I am quite aware that very considerable learning has been employed in the attempt to explain away this passage, and the reader who wishes to see how a plain statement may thus be darkened, may refer to the works mentioned below."[96]

[95] The following is Selden's translation of the passage from the Arabic:—"Constituit item Marcus Evangelista duodecim Presbyteros cum Hanania, qui nempe manerent cum Patriarcha, adeo ut cum vacaret Patriarchatus, eligerent unum e duodecim Presbyteris cujus capiti reliqui undecim manus imponerent eumque benedicerent et Patriarcham eum crearent, et dein virum aliquem insignem eligerent eumque Presbyterum secum constituerent loco ejus qui sic factus est Patriarcha, ut ita semper extarent duodecim. Neque desiit Alexandriæ institutum hoc de Presbyteris, ut scilicet Patriarchas crearent ex Presbyteris duodecim, usque ad tempora Alexandri Patriarchæ Alexandrini qui fuit ex numero illo cccxviii Is autem vetuit ne deinceps Patriarcham Presbyteri crearent. Et decrevit ut mortuo Patriarcha convenirent Episcopi qui Patriarcham ordinarent. Decrevit item ut, vacante Patriarchatu, eligerent sive ex quacunque regione, sive ex duodecim illis Presbyteris, sive aliis, ut res ferebat, virum aliquem eximium, eumque Patriarcham crearent. Atque ita evanuit institutum illud antiquius, quo creari solitus a Presbyteris Patriarchia, et successit in locum ejus decretum de Patriarcha ab Episcopis creando." *Eutych. Patr. Alex. Ecclesiæ suæ orig. Ed. J. Selden.* London, 1642. 4to. pp. 2)—31.

[96] See Abr. Echell. Eutychius Vindicatus, Morinus De Ordinat Renaudot. Hist. Patriarch Alex.

Gieseler pertinently remarks, in regard to it, that "it is at least certain that the part which is contradictory to the usage of later times has not been interpolated; and so far it has an historical value."[97]

The right of presbyters to ordain, and the validity of presbyterian ordination, was never called in question, according to Planck, until the bishops began, about the middle of the third century, to assert the doctrine of the apostolical succession. "With the name it seemed desirable also to inherit the authority of the apostles. For this purpose they availed themselves of the right of ordination. The right of ordination of course devolved exclusively upon the bishops as alone competent rightly to administer it. As they had been duly constituted the successors of the apostles, so also had they alone the right to communicate the same in part or fully, by the imposition of hands. From this time onward, to give the rite more effect, it was administered with more imposing solemnity." And in all probability it became customary at this early period to utter in the laying on of hands, those words of prelatical arrogance and shocking irreverence, 'Receive the Holy Ghost' for the office and work of a bishop.[98]

Dr. Neander has assured the writer, in conversation on this point, that beyond a doubt presbyters were accustomed to ordain in the ages immediately succeeding the apostles. The testimony of Firmilian, given above, is, according to Neander, explicit in confirmation of this fact, and the same sentiments are also expressed or implied in his works. If further evidence is needed on this point, it is given at length and with great ability by Blondell, who, after occupying one hundred quarto pages with the argument, sums up the result of the discussion in the following syllogism:

[97] Cited in the author's Christian Antiquities, p. 103. In addition to the authors mentioned above, by Goode, are Le Quien and Petavius. Comp. also, Neander, Allgem. Gesch. 1. S. 325, 326, 2d edit., Note. J. F. Rehkopf, Vitae Patriarcharum Alexandr. fasc. I and II.

[98] Planck, Gesell. Verfass. 1. S. 158—161.

"To whom the usage of the church has assigned, in reality, the same functions, to them, it has also from the beginning ascribed the same ministerial parity, and of course, the same dignity.

"But the usage of the church has assigned to bishops and presbyters, in reality, the same functions in the right of confirmation, of dedication of churches, of taking the veil, of the reconciling of penitents, and in the ordination of presbyters, deacons, etc.

"Therefore, it has, from the beginning, declared that bishops and presbyters, are in all respects equal, and of necessity, that they are the same in dignity or rank."[99]

Even the decrees of ecclesiastical councils which restrict the right of ordination to the bishops alone, distinctly imply that from the beginning it was not so limited. Why deny to presbyters the right to ordain, by a formal decree, if they had never enjoyed that right? The prohibition is an evident restriction of their early prerogatives.

But we forbear; enough has been said to vindicate the right of presbyters to ordain, and to perform all the functions of the ministerial office. Indeed, we cannot but wonder that it should ever have been called in question. How extraordinary the hardihood with which, in the face of authorities a thousand times collated and repeated, we are still told that "the idea of ordination, by any but bishops was an unheard-of thing in the primitive church."[100] The burden of proof rests with overwhelming weight upon those who venture on such assertions. This idea is forcibly presented by Dr. Miller, in the following extract, with which we close this review of

[99] Apologia pro sententia Hieronomi de Episcopis et presbyteris. Amstelod. 1616, 4to.

[100] "So much for the idea of any but bishops ordaining in the primitive church. Never was this allowed before the Reformation; either in the church, or by any sect however wild!"—*Review of Coleman's Christian Antiquities*, by H. W. D. a presbyter in Philadelphia.

the authority of the fathers on the point now under consideration.

"The friends of prelacy have often, and with much apparent confidence, challenged us to produce out of all the early fathers, a single instance of an *ordination* performed by *presbyters*. Those who give this challenge might surely be expected in all decency and justice, to have a case of *Episcopal* ordination ready to be brought forward, from the same venerable records. But have they ever produced such a case? They have not. Nor can they produce it. As there is unquestionably, no instance mentioned in Scripture of any person, with the title of *bishop*, performing an ordination; so it is equally certain that no such instance has yet been found in any Christian writer within the *first two centuries*. Nor can a single instance be produced of a person, already ordained as a *presbyter*, receiving a new and second ordination as *bishop*. To find a precedent favorable to their doctrine, the advocates of Episcopacy have been under the necessity of wandering into periods when the simplicity of the gospel had in a considerable degree, given place to the devices of men; and when the *man of sin* had commenced that system of unhallowed usurpation, which for so many centuries corrupted and degraded the church of God.

"Such is the result of the appeal to the early fathers. They are so far from giving even a semblance of support to the Episcopal claim, that, like the Scriptures, they everywhere speak a language wholly inconsistent with it, and favorable only to the doctrine of ministerial parity. What then shall we say of the assertions so often and so confidently made, that the doctrine of a superior order of *bishops*, has been maintained in the church, 'from the earliest ages,' in 'the ages immediately succeeding the apostles,' and 'by all the fathers from the beginning?' What shall we say of the assertion, that the Scriptures, *interpreted* by the writings of the *early fathers*, decidedly support the same doctrine? I will

only say, that those who find themselves able to justify such assertions, must have been much more successful in discovering early authorities in aid of their cause, than the most diligent, learned, and keen-sighted of their predecessors."[101]

We have even high Episcopal authority for presbyterian ordination. Repugnant as is this view of ordination to the modern advocates of Episcopacy, it accords with the sentiments of Archbishop Cranmer, and the first protestant bishops of the church of England. The following extract from a highly interesting document contains the answer of that venerable prelate himself, to certain questions propounded to a select assembly at Windsor Castle, in the reign of Edward the sixth.

"A bishop may make a priest by the Scriptures, and so may princes and governors alsoe, and that by the auctority of God committed to them, and the people alsoe by their election. For as we reade that bishops have done it, so Christian emperors and princes usually have done it. And the people before Christian princes were, commonly did elect their bishops and priests. In the New Testament, he that is appointed to be a bishop or a priest, needeth no consecration by the Scripture; for election or appointing thereto is sufficient."[102]

[101] Miller's Letters, pp. 108, 109.

[102] See transcript of the whole of the original, which was subscribed with Cranmer's own hand, in Bishop Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*, Part II. c. 7. § 2. See also, Burnet's *History of the Reformation*, P. I, pp. 318, 321. Cited from Conder's Nonconformity. Many other authorities from English writers are given in S. Mather's Apology for the Liberty of the Churches, Chap. 2. p. 51. They have also been collected, and collated with great industry and research, by Rev. Dr. Smyth, in his Apostolical Succession, and his Presbytery not Prelacy. So, also, in an article in the Christian Spectator, New Series, Vol. II. p. 720, from whence several of the authorities given below are taken.

A volume might be filled with authorities from the English church alone, in which both her most distinguished prelates and her most eminent scholars concede to presbyters a virtual equality with bishops, and the right to ordain.

The Necessary Erudition of a Christian Man, drawn up with great care, approved by both houses of Parliament in 1543, and prefaced by an epistle from the king himself, declares, that, "priests [*presbyters*] and bishops are, by God's law, one and the same; and that the powers of *ordination* and excommunication belong equally to both." Under Elizabeth it was enacted by parliament, "that the *ordination* of foreign churches should be held valid."

The learned Whittaker, of Cambridge, declares the doctrine of the reformers to be, that "presbyters, being by divine right the same as bishops, *they might warrantably set other presbyters over the churches.*"

Archbishop Usher, one of the brightest ornaments of the Episcopal church, on being asked by Charles I, in the Isle of Wight, whether he found in antiquity that "*presbyters alone did ordain?*" answered, "*yes,*" and that he would show his Majesty more—"even where *presbyters* alone successively ordained *bishops;*" and he brought as an instance of this, the presbyters of Alexandria choosing and making their own bishop, from the days of Mark till Heraclas and Dionysius.

Bishop Stillingfleet says, "It is acknowledged by the stoutest champions of Episcopacy, before these late unhappy divisions, that ordination performed by presbyters in case of necessity is valid."

Bishop Forbes. "Presbyters have by divine right the power of ordaining as well as of preaching and baptizing."

Sir Peter King, Lord Chancellor of England, after asserting the equality of bishops and presbyters, and showing at length, that the latter had full authority to administer the ordinances, adds, "As for ordination, I find clearer proofs of

presbyters *ordaining*, than of their administering the Lord's supper."

The first reformers, under the reign of King Edward, according to Neal, in his history of the Puritans, "believed but two orders of churchmen in holy Scripture—bishops and deacons; and consequently, that bishops and priests [presbyters] were but different ranks or degrees of the same order." Acting on this principle, "they gave the right hand of fellowship to foreign churches, and to ministers who had not been ordained by bishops."

The doctrine of the *divine right* of bishops, from which that of the exclusive validity of their ordination proceeds, was first promulgated in a sermon preached Jan. 12, 1588 in the English by Dr. Bancroft. He first maintained that bishops are a distinct order from priests or presbyters, and have authority over them *jure divino*, and directly from God. This bold and novel assertion created a great sensation throughout the kingdom. It was a vast extension of the prerogatives of the bishops, by which the oppression of the Puritans was increased to an incalculable degree. "The greater part even of the prelatic party themselves were startled by the novelty of the doctrine; for none of the English reformers had ever regarded the bishops as anything else but a human institution, appointed for the more orderly government of the church; and they were not prepared at once to condemn as heretical all churches where that institution did not exist. Whitgift himself, perceiving the use which might be made of such a tenet said that the doctor's sermon had done much good,—though for his own part, he rather wished than believed it to be true."[103] The doctrine was re-affirmed half a century later by Laud and his party;[104] and from that time has been the favorite dogma of many in the Episcopal church.

Even at the present time the validity of presbyterian ordi-

[103] Hitherton's History of the Westminster, pp. 49, 50.
[104] Hallam's Constitutional History, Vol. II. pp. 440—1.

nation is acknowledged by many in the Episcopal church. Not twenty years since, one of the principal conductors of the Christian Observer said to an American gentleman, "I have not for ten years seen the man who was so utterly foolish, as to claim any exclusive divine right for our ordination, or ordinances; or who hesitated to acknowledge other communions as churches of Christ."

And Goode also, who has written from Cambridge, with great ability against the Tractarians, says:—"I admit that for the latter point [ordination by bishops alone, as successors of the apostles], there is not any Scripture proof; but we shall find here, as in other cases, that as the proof is not to be found in Scripture, so antiquity also is divided with respect to it; and moreover, that though it is the doctrine of our church, yet that it is held by her with an allowance for those who may differ from her on that point, and not as if the observance of it was requisite by divine command, and essential to the validity of all ordinations; though for the preservation of the full *ecclesiastical* regularity of her own orders, she has made it essential to the ministers of her own communion."[105] In support of this opinion he proceeds to enumerate many of the authorities of the fathers given above.

Finally, we add the following extract, not again from an "irreverent dissenter,"—to use the flippant cant of one of the Tractarians,—but from a devoted son of their own church, a distinguished layman of England, who has written with great ability and good effect, against the doctrines of Puseyism and the high church party.

"It is no part of my plan to trace the origin or course of departure from the system of church government in the apostolical times, as it lies before us in all its simplicity. I admit —indeed, as the lawyers say, it is a part of my case—that some change was unavoidable; and I see nothing in the

[105] Divine Rule, Vol. II. pp. 57, 58.

present constitution of the church of England that is inconsistent with the *principle* of the apostles. But to say that they are identical, is a mere abuse of words. Still less is it to be heard say without some impatience, that there is safety in her communion only as she has descended from the apostles, through all the changes and abominations that have intervened."[106]

After going through with a sketch of the historical argument in defence of his sentiments and citing many of the authorities given above, he proceeds:—"I am aware that in St. Jerome's time there existed generally, though by no means universally, this difference between the bishop and the presbyters, viz., that to the former was then confided the power of ordination. The transition from perfect equality to absolute superiority was not suddenly effected; it was the growth of time; not of years, but of centuries; the distinction of authority or office preceding that of order or degree in the church, and being introductory to it. With the former I have no concern, it being sufficient to show, that as a distinct and superior order in the church, Episcopacy, in the modern acceptation of the term, did not exist in the time of the apostles; and that, however expedient and desirable such an institution might be, it cannot plead the sanction of apostolic appointment or example. It may be difficult to fix the period exactly when the Episcopate was first recognized as a distinct *order* in the church, and when the consecration of bishops, as such, came to be in general use. Clearly not, I think when St. Jerome wrote. Thus much at least is certain, viz. that the government of each church, *including the ordination of ministers*, was at first in the hands of the presbytery; that when one of that body was raised to the office of president, and on whom the title of bishop was conferred, it was simply by the election (co-optatio) of the other presbyters, whose appointment was final, requiring no confirmation or conse-

[106] Bowdler's Letters, pp. 32, 33.

cration at the hands of any other prelates; and that each church was essentially independent of every other.

"If then all this be so, there seems to be an end to the question; for under whatever circumstances the privilege of ordaining was afterwards committed to the bishop, he could of necessity receive no more than it was in their power to bestow, from whom he received it, who were co-ordinate presbyters, not superiors. At whatever period, therefore, it was adopted, and with whatever uniformity it might be continued, and whatever of value or even authority it might hence acquire; still as an apostolical institution it has none: there is a gap which never can be filled; or rather, the link by which the whole must be suspended is wanting and can never be supplied. There can be no apostolical succession of that which had no apostolical existence; whereas the averment to be of any avail must be, not only that it existed in the time of the apostles, but was *so* appointed by them as that there can be no true church without it."[107]

The right of presbyters, then, to ordain, is admitted by moderate Episcopalians even at the present time.[108] It was maintained by the reformers generally, both in England, and on the continent. It was their undoubted prerogative in the early ages of the Christian church.

To sum up all that has been said—if presbyters and bishops are known by the same names, if they are required to possess the same qualifications, and if they are found actually discharging the same duties, then what higher evidence can we expect or desire of their equality and identity? This course of argumentation is precisely similar to that by which orthodoxy defends the supreme divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and his equality with the Father. And none perhaps more readily admit the validity of this mode of

[107] Bowdler's Letters, pp. 48—50.

[108] Comp. Whately's Kingdom of Christ, pp. 151, 212.

argument, when applied to this cardinal principle in the Christian system, than the members of the Episcopal communion. What is the argument for the oneness of Christ with the Father? Simply that he is called by the names, that he possesses the attributes, that he receives the honors and performs the works of the Father; and, therefore, is one with Him. If, then, this course of reasoning commands our assent in these profound mysteries, why not much more in the case under consideration? We confidently rest, in the conclusion of the learned Dr. Wilson, that "whatever misconstructions of the presbyterial office may have obtained, it is and always will be, the highest ordinary office in the Christian church; and no presbyter, who is officially such, can be less than a bishop, and authorized to instruct, govern, and administer, and ordain at least in conjunction with his co-presbyters of the same presbytery and council."

4. Bishops themselves, in their ministerial character, exercised only the jurisdiction, and performed merely the offices, of presbyters in the primitive church.

For the sake of argument, let us admit "that this office of bishop is disclosed to us in the Christian church in the very earliest records of history. Within ten years after the death of St. John, we find that the three orders of ministers were actually denominated bishop, priest and deacon; and to each was assigned the same office, together with nearly the same power and duty as appertain to them at the present day. Hear how Ignatius speaks to the Philadelphians: 'Attend to the bishop, and to the presbytery, and to the deacons.'"[109] Such is the exultation with which Episcopalians appeal to Ignatius. It is indeed clear beyond a doubt, that this writer does speak of bishops, presbyters and deacons; and that, in strains almost of profane adulation, he seeks to exalt the authority both of bishops and presbyters. But the

[109] Bishop De Lancey's Faithful Bishop. Boston, 1843, p. 17.

learned hardly need to be reminded that suspicion rests upon all these epistles of Ignatius. Many, both in this country and in Europe, who are most competent to decide upon their merits, have pronounced them undoubted forgeries. No confidence can be placed upon them as historical authority. Whether they really belong to the second, third, or fourth century, is altogether uncertain. They have been often and carefully canvassed by eminent scholars, both in America and in Europe. Professor Norton declares them to be undoubted forgeries. Rothe has written with surpassing ability a defence of them. But the most probable conjecture, and the one most generally received, is, that they are filled with interpolations from various hands, and of different dates. Such is Dr. Neander's opinion, as stated to the writer in conversation upon them.

Milton, after exposing the absurdities, corruptions and anachronisms of these epistles, proceeds to say, "These, and other like passages, in abundance through all those short epistles, must either be adulterate, or else Ignatius was not Ignatius, nor a martyr, but most adulterate and corrupt himself. In the midst, therefore, of so many forgeries, where shall we fix to dare say this is Ignatius? As for his style, who knows it, so disfigured and interrupted as it is, except they think that where they meet with anything sound and orthodoxal, there they find Ignatius? And then they believe him, not for his own authority, but for a truth's sake, which they derive from elsewhere. To what end then should they cite him as authentic for Episcopacy, when they cannot know what is authentic in him, but by the judgment which they brought with them, and not by any judgment which they might safely learn from him? How can they bring satisfaction from such an author, to whose very essence the reader must be fain to contribute his own understanding? Had God ever intended that we should have sought any part of useful instruction from Ignatius, doubtless he would not have so ill provided for

our knowledge, as to send him to our hands in this broken and disjointed plight; and if he intended no such thing, we do injuriously in thinking to taste better the pure evangelic manna by seasoning our mouths with the tainted scraps and fragments of an unknown table, and searching among the verminous and polluted rags dropped overworn from the toiling shoulders of time, with these deformedly to quilt and interlace the entire, the spotless and undecaying robe of truth, the daughter not of time, but of heaven, only bred up here below in Christian hearts between two grave and holy nurses, the doctrine and discipline of the gospel."[110]

But we will suppose these epistles to be the genuine productions of Ignatius, and that he himself is one of those "apostolic men who drank in Christianity from the living lips of the apostles themselves." Grant it all. What then? Do not these epistles, says the churchman, testify explicitly, clearly, fully, "to the superiority of bishops in government and ordination over presbyters and deacons?" Not in the least. What, we ask, were the dioceses of these bishops of Ignatius's epistles? Nothing but single parishes. What were these venerable bishops themselves? Nothing more than the pastors each of a single congregation. They were merely parish ministers, parochial bishops; and, though bearing the name of bishop, they were as unlike a modern diocesan as can well be imagined. This fact deserves a careful consideration. Let us not deceive ourselves with a name, a title. We are not inquiring after names, but things. Because we read of primitive bishops in the early church, must we suppose that each, of necessity claimed the superiority, or enjoyed the proud distinction of the modern dignitary of the church bearing the same title? The name determines nothing in regard to the official rank and duties of a primitive bishop. Give to a congregational or presbyterian minister this title, and you have made him truly a primitive

[110] Milton's Prelatical Episcopacy. Prose Works, Vol. I. pp. 79, 80.

bishop. These ancient dignitaries, down to the third century, and in many instances, even later, exercised no wider jurisdiction, and performed no higher offices, than a modern presbyter, or any pastor of a single parish or congregation.

In support of the foregoing representation, we have to offer the following considerations:

(*a*) By all primitive writers, the bishop's charge is denominated invariably a *church*, a *congregation*; never in the plural, *churches* or *congregations*.

(*b*) It is admitted by Episcopalians themselves, that the diocese of a primitive bishop comprised only a single church.

(*c*) The Christians under the charge of one of these ancient bishops, were all accustomed to meet in one place, like the people of a modern parish congregation.

(*d*) All under his charge were, in many instances, as familiarly known to the bishop himself, as are the people of a parish to their pastor.

(*e*) So many bishops were found in a single territory, of limited extent, that no one could have exercised a jurisdiction beyond the bounds of a single parish.

(*f*) The charge of a primitive bishop is known, in many instances, not to have equalled that of a modern presbyter or pastor.

(*a*) By all primitive writers, the bishop's charge is denominated invariably a *church*, a *congregation*; never in the plural, *churches* or *congregations*.

The cure of a primitive bishop is never, in a single instance, represented as comprising several congregations, like that of a modern diocesan; but is always restricted to a single body of Christians, denominated a church. As the epistles of Paul the apostle are addressed to the church at Rome, at Corinth, at Ephesus, etc., so those of the apostolical fathers, Clement, Polycarp and Ignatius are addressed,

in like manner, to a single church — to the church at Corinth, at Philippi, at Ephesus, at Smyrna, etc. Neither is the word *church* ever used by the early fathers in a generic sense, for a national or provincial church, as we speak of the church of England, or of Scotland. This fact is so indisputable, that no time need be wasted in the proof of it. But it is worthy of particular attention, as illustrative of the nature of a bishop's office. It presents his duties and his office in total contrast with those which are assigned to him by prelacy. It reveals to us the primitive bishop as merely a parish minister.

"Now as one bishop is invariably considered, in the most ancient usage, as having only one *ἐκκλησία*, it is manifest that his inspection at first was only over one parish. Indeed, the words congregation and parish are, if not synonymous, predicable of each other. The former term relates more properly to the people as actually congregated, the other relates to the extent of ground which the dwelling-houses of the members of one congregation occupy. Accordingly, the territory to which the bishop's charge extended, was always named, in the period I am speaking of, in Greek *παροικία*, in Latin *parochia*, or rather *parœcia*, which answers to the English word *parish*, and means properly a neighborhood."[111]

In the sense above stated, the word in question is said to be used at least six hundred times in the writings of Eusebius alone. Such continued to be the extent of the bishop's charge down to the fourth century.

(*b*) It is admitted by Episcopalians themselves, that the diocese of a primitive bishop comprised only a single church.

On this point the authority of the late Dr. Burton, regius-professor at Oxford, is equally explicit and unexceptionable. In his history of the church at the beginning of the second century, he says: — "The term diocese was not then known;

[111] Campbell's Lectures, pp. 106, 107.

though there may have been instances where the care of more than one congregation was committed to a single bishop, of which we have a very early example in all the Cretan churches being entrusted by Paul to Titus. The name which was generally applied to the flock of a single pastor, was one from which our present word *parish* is derived, which signified his superintendence over the *inhabitants* of a particular place."[112]

Again, at the commencement of the third century, "The term diocese, as has been observed in a former chapter, was of later introduction, and was borrowed by the church from the civil constitution of the empire. At the period which we are now considering, a bishop's diocese was more analogous to a modern parish, and such was the name which it bore. Each parish had, therefore, its own bishop, with a varying number of presbyters, or priests and deacons."[113]

"As for the word diocese, by which the bishop's flock is now expressed, I do not remember that ever I found it used in this sense by any of the ancients. But there is another word still retained by us, by which they frequently denominated the bishop's cure; and that is *parish*."[114]

To the same effect is also the authority of Campbell, and multitudes of others not of the Episcopal communion. "Every bishop had but one congregation or church. This is a remark which deserves your particular notice; as it regards an essential point in the constitution of the primitive church, a point which is generally admitted by those who can make any pretensions to the knowledge of Christian antiquities. . . Now as one bishop is invariably considered in the most ancient usage as having only one ἐκκλησία, *church*, it is manifest that his inspection, at first, was only over one parish."[115] Instead, therefore, of presiding over thousands

[112] History of the Christian Church, p. 179. [113] Ibid., pp. 263, 264.
[114] King's Primitive Church, p. 15.
[115] Campbell's Lectures, pp. 105, 106.

of his fellow-men with an authority, which even princes might envy, this ancient bishop was nothing more than a humble parish minister, having the charge of some little flock over whom he had been duly appointed an overseer in the service of the chief Shepherd.

(*c*) The Christians, under the charge of these ancient bishops, were accustomed to meet all in one place, like the people of a modern parish or congregation.

This is most clearly evident from the fathers of the second, and even of the third century, such as Ignatius,[116] Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian and Cyprian. "Now, from the writings of those fathers, it is evident that the whole flock assembled in the same place *ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό*, with their bishop and presbyters, as on other occasions, so in particular, every Lord's-day, or every Sunday, as it was commonly called, for the purposes of public worship, hearing the Scriptures read, and receiving spiritual exhortations. The perseverance in this practice is warmly recommended by the ancients, and urged on all the Christian brethren, from the consideration of the propriety there is, that those of the same church and parish, and under the same bishop, should all join in one prayer and one supplication, as people who have one mind and one hope. For, it is argued, 'if the prayer of one or two have great efficacy, how much more efficacious must that be which is made by the bishop and the whole church. He, therefore, who doth not assemble with him is denominated proud and self-condemned.'[117] Again, as there was but one place of meeting, so there was but one

[116] For a purpose like the present, we may safely appeal to Ignatius; for though the work may be reasonably suspected to have been interpolated to aggrandize the Episcopal order, it was never suspected of any interpolation with a view to lessen it.

[117] *Εἰ γὰρ ἑνὸς καὶ δευτέρου προσευχὴ τοσαύτην ἰσχὺν ἔχει, πόσῳ μᾶλλον ἥ τε τοῦ ἐπισκόπου καὶ πάσης ἐκκλησίας; Ὁ οὖν μὴ ἐρχόμενος ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό, καὶ ἑαυτὸν διέκρινεν.—Ep. ad Eph.* c. 5.

communion table or altar, as they sometimes metaphorically called it. 'There is but one altar,' said Ignatius, 'for there is but one bishop;'[118] and accordingly, one place of worship." To this may be added the authority of Stillingfleet. "For although when the churches increased, the occasional meetings were frequent in several places, yet still there was but one church, and one altar, and one baptistry, and one bishop, with many presbyters assisting him; and this is so very plain in antiquity, as to the churches planted by the apostles themselves in several parts, that none but a stranger to the history of the church can ever call it in question."[119]

We have here another illustration of the parochial Episcopacy, which, in the ancient church, restricted the labors of the minister of Christ to a single church and congregation.

(*d*) All under the bishop's charge were, in some instances, as familiarly known to him as are the people of a parish to their pastor.

Polycarp, for example, bishop of Smyrna, is exhorted by Ignatius to know all of his church by name, even the men-servants and maid-servants; to take care of the widows within his diocese; to take cognizance personally of all marriages; and to suffer nothing to escape his notice.[120]

All this evidently requires of the bishop a personal acquaintance with the people of his charge, even more familiar, and a personal supervision over them more minute, than that of the pastor of a single parish in any of our cities. Even the

[118] "*Εν θυσιαστήριον ὡς εἷς ἐπίσκοπος.* Ep. ad Phil. c. 8. Campbell's Lectures, p. 109.

[119] Stillingfleet, Serm. against Separat. p. 27, cited by Clarkson, p. 17.

[120] *Ἐξ ὀνόματος πάντας ζήτει. Δούλους καὶ δούλας μὴ ὑπερηφάνει· Χῆραι μὴ ἀμελείσθωσαν. Πρέπει δὲ τοῖς γαμοῦσι καὶ ταῖς γαμουμέναις, μετὰ γνώμης τοῦ ἐπισκόπου τὴν ἕνωσιν ποιεῖσθαι. Μηδὲν ἄνευ γνώμης σου γινέσθω.—Ignatius ad Polycarp*, c. 4, 5.

bishop of Tyre had a diocese so small that he had a personal knowledge of every Christian within it.[121] Carthage, again, was one of the largest cities in the world; and yet Cyprian, the bishop of that city, made it a duty to preserve a familiar acquaintance with all his people, and to provide for the needy and destitute among them.[122] To such primitive Episcopacy who can object?

(*e*) So many bishops were found in a single territory of limited extent, that no one could have exercised jurisdiction beyond the bounds of a single parish.

Take, for example, a single province, that of Africa; and in doing this, we are happy to avail ourselves of the inquiries of another. "The testimony of Du Pin on this point, himself a prelatist, is invaluable. He describes, in the first place, the ancient province of Africa, as nearly commensurate with the modern Barbary States, and then proceeds to remark as follows:

"'All this tract, both before and after the subjection of the Romans, contained an almost countless number of people. There were found cities, towns, boroughs, military stations (*castellis*), and villages, both of natives and colonists, in great number; and, by the fertility of the soil, and abundance of its produce, as well as by mercantile trade, it became very wealthy. Hence we find so great a multitude of Christians in these regions, to govern whom were appointed very many bishops, far more numerous, indeed, and nearer together, than in some other parts of the Christian world.

[121] Schoene, Geschichtsforschungen, Bd. III. S. 336.

[122] Cumque ego vos pro me vicarios miserim ut expungeretis necessitates fratrum nostrorum sumptibus, si qui vellent suas artes exercere, additamento quantum satis esset desideriis eorum juvaretis, simul etiam et aetates eorum et conditiones et merita discerneretis; ut etiam nunc ego, *cui cura incumbit omnes optimè nosse* et dignos quosque, et humiles et mites ad ecclesiasticae administrationis officia promoverem.—*Ep.* 38. p. 51.

For in these parts it was customary to appoint bishops not only in great cities, but in villages, or villas, and in small cities (*in vicis aut villis et in modicis civitatibus*); which was guarded against by the 57th canon of the Council of Laodicea, and the 7th canon of that of Sardica. But that rule obtained, not in Africa, where it is on record that bishops were ordained not only in great cities, but in all the towns (*in cunctis oppidis*), and not unfrequently in villages and military stations (*in vicis et castellis*); which multitude of bishops' Sees, that had sprung up, even from the very first rise of the African churches, was increased by the emulation of the Catholics and Donatists.'[123]

"Such are the statements of one of the learned historians, one whose judgment is universally respected. Such, too, must be the convictions of every one who makes himself acquainted with the surviving documents of the African churches. Let any one turn over the pages of the Minutes of the Conference (*gesta collationis*) between the Catholics and Donatists at Carthage, in A. D. 411, at which 565 bishops were present, and he must come to the conclusion that Mons. Du Pin has told the truth.

"So strong is the evidence from this quarter, that Bingham is constrained to admit, that 'during the time of the schism of the Donatists, many new bishoprics were erected in *very small towns* in Africa; as appears from the acts of the Collation of Carthage, where the Catholics and Donatists mutually charge each other with the practice; that they divided single bishoprics sometimes into three or four; and made bishops in *country towns and villages*, to augment the numbers of their parties.'[124]

"It will be observed, that this practice was pursued as

[123] Du Pin's Sacred Geography of Africa, prefixed to his edition of "The Seven Books of St. Optatus, bishop of Mileve in Africa," on the schism of the Donatists, published at Paris, A. D. 1700, p. 57.

[124] Bingham's Antiq. of Christ. Church, B. 2. c. 12. § 3.

well by the Orthodox as their opponents. Wherever a few people could be gathered together, they organized them into a church, and placed a bishop over them. And when that church became very numerous they divided it again (except in the great cities), just as we are accustomed to do at the present day. There was nothing in the idea of a church, or of a bishop, that forbade this practice. Nay, it was provided for by an ecclesiastical law of the province. The fifth canon of the second council of Carthage (A. D. 390) provides, that 'if, in the course of time, as religion prospers, any people of God should be so multiplied as to desire to have a rector of their own, they should have a bishop, in case they obtained the consent of him to whose authority the diocese was subject.'

"Du Pin says, 'We have drawn out of ancient documents the names of *six hundred and ninety bishoprics* in Africa.'[125] He annexes a catalogue of their names, and re-

[125] Georg. Sac. Africae, p. 59. Schoene says, Geschichtsforschungen, Bd. III. 335, that in the time of Augustine there were *nine hundred* bishops in Africa. The number is evidently made out in the following manner. Augustine, in his minutes of the first day's conference between the Catholics and Donatists, says, that of the Catholics, 286 answered to their names, 20 subscribed not, 120 were absent, detained by reason of their age, infirmity, or other causes; and that 60 of their bishopries were vacant, making a total of 426 bishops and 486 bishopries.

Of the Donatists, 279 were present, many more than 120 were absent, and many of their bishoprics were vacant.—*Opera*, Vol. IX. p. 374, F. 375, 376, A. Antwerp, 1700.

Augustine also states, that the Maximinianists were condemned by a council of 310 of the Donatists. Contra Parmenlam, Lib. 1. Tom. 9. c. 18. p. 15, B. Contra Crescon. Don. Lib. 3. c. 52. p. 315, E. Lib. 4. c. 7. p. 331, D. The Donatists, moreover, themselves boasted that they had more than 400 bishops in Africa. Post. Coll. c. 24, p. 411, D. In addition to all these, the Maximinianists afford another legion of bishops in this same province, 100 or more of whom condemned Priminianus. Contra Crescon. Don. Lib. 4. c. 6. p. 331, D. Post. Coll. c. 30. We are now prepared to make up the roll of Af-

fers in every instance to the document or documents where they are found. With reason, therefore, he says, 'there is not one of these that has not at some time a bishop, as may be gathered from ecclesiastical documents.'"[126]

(*f*) The charge of a primitive bishop is known in many instances not to have equalled that of a modern presbyter or pastor.

Bishops were found in villages and military stations in Africa, as we have just seen. Ischyrus was made bishop of a very small village, containing but few inhabitants.[127] Paul, one of the famous council of Nice, was only bishop of a fort, *φρούριον*, near the river Euphrates.[128] Eulogius and Barses, monks of Edessa, had each no city, but only a monastery for a diocese; or rather their title was merely honorary, an empty name, with which no charge was connected.[129] Others, again, were bishops of cities where there were no Christians whatever, and but few in the country round about.[130]

The council of Sardica, c. 7, and of Laodicea, c. 57, in the fourth century, denounced the custom of ordaining bishops "in villages and small cities, lest the authority of a bishop should be brought into contempt." But a hundred years later, the custom still prevailed to a considerable extent. Even Gregory Nazianzen, one of the most learned

rican bishops. Catholics, 426, Donatists, 400, Maximinianists, 100. Total, 926,—to say nothing of vacant Sees. In such astonishing profusion are these dioceses, these Episcopal Sees, scattered broad-cast over the single province of Africa.

[126] New York Evangelist, Vol. XIV. p. 182. 1843.

[127] *Κώμη βραχυτάτη, καὶ ὀλίγων ἀνθρώπων.—Athans. Apol.* 2. Vol. I. p. 200.

[128] Theodoret, Eccl. Hist. Lib. 1. c. 6.

[129] *Οἱ καὶ ἐπισκόπω ἄμφω ὕστερον ἐγενέσθην, οὐ πόλεως τινὸς ἀλλὰ τιμῆς ἕνεκεν. . . . χειροτονηθέντες ἐν τοῖς ἰδίοις μοναστηρίοις.—Sozomen, Eccl. Hist.* Lib. 6. c. 34. p. 691.

[130] Schoene, Geschichtsforschungen, Bd. III. S. 536.

and eloquent men of his age, worthy to have been "a professor of eloquence," after having studied in Caesarea, in Alexandria, and in Athens, was bishop, in the last half of the fourth century, first of Zazime, "a dismal" place; and afterwards of Nazianzum, *πόλεως ἐντελοῦς, vilis oppidi*, an inferior place.[131] Even in the middle of the fifth century, diocesan Episcopacy was but partially established. In some countries, "there were bishops over many cities," but in others, they were still "consecrated in villages," *κώμαις*.[132]

But we need not enlarge. If any one wishes for further information on this point, he has only to refer to Clarkson on Primitive Episcopacy, an antiquated work, evincing a remarkable familiarity with the records of antiquity, in which facts, almost innumerable, have been brought together, all tending to show that the bishop of the primitive church had a charge no greater than a curate, or presbyter, or parish minister.

Grant then to prelacy all her claims. Run back her 'unbroken succession' to these days of primitive simplicity, and it leads you up, not to an Episcopal palace, but to the cottage, the cell, it may be, of an obscure curate. The modern bishop has only deceived himself with a name. While he reads of ancient bishops, he idly dreams of Episcopal powers and prerogatives that were unknown in the church until the days of Constantine the Great.

It is a sophism often used with effect, deceiving the simple and the wise, to surround an ancient and venerable name with modern associations. So delusive are our comparisons of that which is unknown with what is well known; so deceptive our judgment of the past by the present. Tityrus, the poet's simple swain, foolishly thought Rome herself just such another as his own Mantua, where the shepherds were wont to drive their tender lambs. So he had seen whelps,

[131] Socrates, Eccl. Hist. Lib. 4. c. 26. p. 242.
[132] Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. Lib. 7. c. 19. p. 734.

like dogs; so kids, like goats. Thus he was wont to compare great things with small. But what was his surprise to see the imperial city rearing her head as high above others as the cypress rises above the limber shrubs.[133] He had deceived himself by his false comparisons. A similar deception, though in its effects precisely the reverse of this, we practice upon ourselves when we bring a modern, into comparison with a primitive bishop. But on examination the delusion vanishes. The far-spreading domains of the diocesan, shrink into a little hamlet; the proud Episcopal palace becomes a poor parsonage; and the lofty prelate, a humble presbyter, the pastor of a little flock.

The bearings of this view of the subject upon prelacy are obvious.

1. It denies the exclusive virtue of Episcopal ordination.

The relations of the foregoing view to the exclusive validity of Episcopal ordination, are clearly set forth in the following passage from Clarkson, himself an Episcopalian:

"Hereby, also, some mistakes about Episcopal *ordinations*, of ill consequence, may be rectified. A bishop, in the best ages of Christianity, was no other than the pastor of a single church. A pastor of a single congregation is now as truly a bishop. They were duly ordained in those ages, who were set apart for the work of the ministry by the pastor of a single church, with the concurrence of some assistants. Why they should not be esteemed to be duly ordained, who are accordingly set apart by a pastor of a single church now, I can discern no reason, after I have looked

[133] Urbem quam dicunt Romam, Meliboee, putavi
Stultus, ego huic nostrae similem, quò saepe solemus
Pastores ovium teneros depellere foetus.
Sic canibus catulos similes, sic matribus haedos
Nòram; sic parvis componere magna solebam.
Verùm haec tantùm alias inter caput extulit urbes,
Quantùm lenta solent inter viburna cupressi.—*Virgil*, *Buc.* 1.

every way for it. Let something be assigned which will make an essential difference herein; otherwise they that judge such *ordinations* here, and in other reformed churches, to be nullities, will hereby declare all the ordinations in the ancient church for three or four hundred years, to be null and void, and must own the dismal consequences that ensue thereof. They that will have no ordinations but such as are performed by one who has many churches under him, maintain a novelty never known nor dreamt of in the ancient churches, while their state was tolerable. They may as well say the ancient church had never a bishop (if their interest did not hinder, all the reason they make use of in this case would lead them to it), as deny that a reformed pastor has no power to ordain, because he is not a bishop. He has Episcopal ordination, even such as the canons require, being set apart by two or three pastors at least, who are as truly diocesans as the ancient bishops, for some whole ages."[134]

2. It exposes also the futility of the doctrine of apostolical succession.

"The theory is, that each bishop, from the apostolic times, has received in his consecration a mysterious 'gift,' and also transmits to every priest in his ordination a mysterious 'gift,' indicated in the respective offices by the awful words, 'Receive the Holy Ghost;' that on this the right of priests to assume their functions, and the preternatural grace of the sacraments administered by them, depends; that bishops, once consecrated, instantly become a sort of Leyden jar of spiritual electricity, and are invested with the remarkable property of transmitting the 'gift' to others; that this has been the case from the primitive age till now; that this high gift has been incorruptibly transmitted through the hands of impure, profligate, heretical ecclesiastics, as ignorant and flagitious as any of their lay cotemporaries; that, in fact,

[134] Primitive Episcopacy, pp. 182, 183. London, 1688.

these 'gifts' are perfectly irrespective of the moral character and qualifications both of bishop and priest, and reside in equal integrity in a Bonner or a Cranmer,—a parson Adams or a parson Trulliber."[135]

Now, we ask, were these countless multitudes of bishops all episcopally ordained, scattered through the earth, as they were, from Britain to the remotest Indies; in cities, towns, villages, forts, military stations, monasteries, and we know not where? Can these mysterious 'gifts' and graces be so diffused abroad over the earth, and bandied about from hand to hand, without the hazard that, amidst a thousand contingencies, they may have fallen away or lost their ethereal power? Has no graceless hypocrite crept in unawares among the Lord's anointed, and, with unholy hand, essayed these awful mysteries, vainly assuming to transmit by uncanonized rites, this heavenly grace? Has no link been broken in this mysterious chain, stretching onward from the distant age of the apostles down to the present? Has no irregularity disturbed the succession, no taint of heresy marred the purity of its descent? Believe it who can.[136]

[135] Edinburgh Rev. April, 1843, pp. 269, 270.

[136] "We can imagine the perplexity of a presbyter thus cast in doubt as to whether or not he has ever had the invaluable 'gift' of apostolical succession conferred upon him. As that 'gift' is neither tangible nor visible, the subject neither of experience nor consciousness;—as it cannot be known by any 'effects' produced by it (for that mysterious efficacy which attends the administration of rites at its possessor's hands, is, like the gift which qualifies him to administer them, also invisible and intangible),—he may imagine, unhappy man! that he has been 'regenerating' infants by baptism, when he has been simply sprinkling them with water. 'What is the matter?' the spectator of his distractions might ask. 'What have you lost?' 'Lost!' would be the reply; 'I fear I have lost my apostolical succession, or rather my misery is, that I do not know and cannot tell whether I ever had it to lose!' It is of no use here to suggest the usual questions, 'When did you see it last? When were you last conscious of possessing it?' What a peculiar property is that, of which, though so invaluable,—nay, on which the whole efficacy of

3. It is fatal to the claims of high Episcopacy to be regarded as the "one catholic and apostolic church."

This holy catholic church, one and invisible, deriving divine rights by regular succession from the apostles,—where or what is it? Who, this house of Aaron, that have kept all the while the sacred fire of the altar, borne up and defended the tabernacle of the Lord, and guarded thus from all profane intrusion the ark of the covenant? This royal priesthood, these that were at first created, and have always continued, wholly a right seed,—who, or what are they? What form of error, we seriously ask, what species of delusion, what kind of schism, what creature of sin, has not, at some time, found a place within this same immaculate church, as a component part of this strange Episcopal unity,—a unity only of chaos and infinite confusion? The whole system of high, exclusive Episcopacy is anything but a semblance of that apostolic church of which it so proudly boasts. In its doctrines, in its government, and in all the apparatus of its canons and its traditions, what has it now in common with the church, as she was in the days of the apostles? This "one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church" of prelacy,—like the famous ship of ancient Grecian story, which by continued decay and repairs, came to be so changed at last that nothing of

the Christian ministry depends,—a man has no positive evidence to show whether he ever had it or not! which, if ever conferred, was conferred without his knowledge; and which if it could be taken away, would still leave him ignorant, not only when, where and how the theft was committed, but whether it had ever been committed or not! The sympathizing friend might, probably, remind him, that as he was not sure he had ever had it, so, *perhaps*, he still had it without knowing it. '*Perhaps!*' he would reply; 'but it is certainty I want.' 'Well,' it might be said, 'Mr. Gladstone assures you, that, on the most moderate computation, your chances are as 8000 to 1 that you have it!' 'Pish!' the distracted man would exclaim, 'what does Mr. Gladstone know about the matter?' And, truly, to *that* query we know not well what answer the friend could make."—*Edinburgh Rev.*, p. 271.

the original remained,—she has, indeed, still the same name; but all else, how changed! One by one, her every part has gone to decay, and given place to something else. And she lies now at her moorings, with scarcely a beam, or plank, or fragment of her shrouds remaining from the original and noble frame-work of the great architect; yet proudly claiming still an exclusive right to the honored name which she so much dishonors. This "catholic, apostolic church,"—pray, in what consists her identity with the church of the holy apostles?

"A real, living *unity*, and a well regulated *liberty*," says Riddle, "characterized the early constitution of the church. But liberty was afterwards sacrificed to unity; and this unity itself degenerated into a merely external, forced, and dead *union*,—which became subservient to the purposes of oppression, and to the growth of the hierarchy."

4. The original equality of bishops and presbyters continued to be acknowledged, from the rise of the Episcopal hierarchy down to the time of the Reformation.

The claims of prelatical Episcopacy were attacked in the fifth century with great spirit by Jerome, who denied the superiority of bishops, giving at the same time an explanation of the origin of this groundless distinction, widely different from that of divine right by apostolical authority. Several passages from this author have already been given under another head, to which we subjoin the following, with a translation, and an analysis by Dr. Mason.

"Thus he lays down *doctrine* and *fact* relative to the government of the church, in his commentary on Titus 1: 5.

"*That thou shouldest ordain presbyters in every city, as I had appointed thee.*[137] 'What sort of presbyters ought to be

[137] "Qui qualis Presbyter debeat ordinari, in consequentibus disserens hoc ait: Si qui est sine crimine, unius uxoris vir," et caetera: postea intulit, "Oportet Episcopum sine crimine esse, tanquam Dei

ordained he shows afterwards. *If any be blameless, the husband of one wife*, etc. and then adds, *for a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God*, etc. A *presbyter*, therefore, is the *same* as a *bishop:* and before there were, *by the instigation of the devil*, parties in religion; and it was said among different people, *I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas*, the churches were governed by *the joint counsel of the presbyters.* But *afterwards*, when every one accounted those whom he baptized as belonging to himself and not to Christ, it was *de-*

dispensatorem." Idem est ergo Presbyter, qui et Episcopus, et antequam *diaboli instinctu*, studia in religione fierent, et diceretur in populis: "Ego sum Pauli, ego Apollo, ego autem Cephae:" *communi Presbyterorum consilio* ecclesiae gubernabantur. Postquam vero unusquisque eos, quos baptizaverat, suos putabat esse, non Christi: *in toto orbe decretum est, ut unus de Presbyteris electus superponeretur caeteris ad quem omnis ecclesiae cura pertineret*, et schismatum semina tollerentur. Putet aliquis non scripturarum, sed nostram, esse sententiam Episcopum et Presbyterum unum esse; et aliud aetatis, aliud esse nomen officii; relegat Apostoli ad Philipenses verba dicentis; Paulus et Timotheus servi Jesu Christi, omnibus sanctis in Christo Jesu, qui sunt Philippis, cum Episcopis et Diaconis, gratia vobis et pax, et reliqua. Philippi *una* est urbs Macedoniae, et certe in una civitate *plures* ut nuncupantur, *Episcopi esse non poterant.* Sed quia *eosdem Episcopos illo tempore* quos et *Presbyteros* apellabant, propterea indifferentur de Episcopis quasi de Presbyteris est locutus. Adhuc hoc alicui videatur ambiguum, nisi altero testimonio comprobetur. In Actibus Apostolorum scriptum est, quod cum venisset Apostolus Miletum miserit Ephesum, et vocaverit Presbyteros ecclesiae ejusdem, quibus postea inter caetera sit locutus; *attendite vobis et omni gregi in quo vos Spiritus Sanctus posuit Episcopos, pascere Ecclesiam Domini, quam acquisivit per sanguinem suum.* Et hoc diligentius observate, quo modo *unius civitatis* Ephesi *Presbyteros* vocans, postea eosdem *Episcopos* dixerit.—Haec propterea, ut ostenderemus *apud veteres* eosdem fuisse Presbyteros et Episcopos. *Paulatim* vero, ut dissentionum plantaria evellerentur, ad *unum* omnem solicitudinem esse delatam.—Sicut ergo Presbyteri *sciunt se ex ecclesiae consuetudine* ei, qui sibi propositus fuerit, esse subjectos, ita Episcopi noverint se *magis consuetudine quam dispositionis dominicae veritate*, Presbyteris esse majores, HIERONYMI *Com. in Tit.* I. 1. *Opp.* Vol. IV. p. 413, ed. Paris. 1693—1706. The same may be found in Rothe, S. 209.

creed throughout the whole world that one, chosen from among the presbyters, should be put over the rest, and that the whole care of the church should be committed to him, and the seeds of schism taken away.

" 'Should any one think that this is only my own private opinion, and not the doctrine of the Scriptures, let him read the words of the apostle in his epistle to the Philippians: "Paul and Timotheus, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons," etc. Philippi, is a *single* city of Macedonia; and certainly in one city there could not be *several bishops* as they are now styled; but as they, at that time, called the very same persons bishops whom they called presbyters, the apostle has spoken without distinction of bishops as presbyters.

" 'Should this matter yet appear doubtful to any one, unless it be proved by an additional testimony, it is written in the Acts of the Apostles, that when Paul had come to Miletum, he sent to Ephesus and called the presbyters of that church, and among other things said to them, "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops." Take particular notice, that calling the PRESBYTERS of the single city of Ephesus, he afterwards names the same persons BISHOPS.' After further quotations from the Epistle to the Hebrews, and from Peter, he proceeds: 'Our intention in these remarks is to show, that among the ancients, *presbyters and bishops were* THE VERY SAME. But that BY LITTLE AND LITTLE, that the plants of dissension might be plucked up, the whole concern was devolved upon an individual. As the presbyters, therefore, KNOW that they are subjected, BY THE CUSTOM OF THE CHURCH, to him who is set over them, so let the bishops know that they are greater than presbyters, MORE BY CUSTOM THAN BY ANY REAL APPOINTMENT OF CHRIST.' "[138]

[138] Mason's Works, Vol. III. pp. 225—228.

Again: "with the ancients, bishops and presbyters may have been one and the same, because the one denotes dignity in office, the other, superiority in age."[139]

"Here is an account of the origin and progress of Episcopacy by a father whom the Episcopalians themselves admit to have been the most able and learned man of his age; and how contradictory it is to their own account the reader will be at no loss to perceive, when he shall have followed us through an analysis of its several parts.

(*a*) JEROME expressly denies the superiority of bishops to presbyters, by *divine right*. To prove his assertion on this head, he goes directly to the Scriptures; and argues as the advocates of parity do, from the interchangeable titles of bishop and presbyter; from the *directions* given to them without the least intimation of difference in their authority; and from the *powers* of presbyters, undisputed in his day.

(*b*) JEROME states it as a *historical fact*, that this government of the churches *by presbyters alone*, continued until, for the avoiding of scandalous quarrels and schisms, it was thought expedient to *alter* it.

(*c*) JEROME states it as a *historical fact*, that this change in the government of the church, this creation of a superior order of ministers, took place, not at once, but *by degrees*,—'*Paulatim*,' says he, 'by little and little.'

(*d*) JEROME states, as *historical facts*, that the elevation of one presbyter over the others was a *human contrivance;* was not *imposed* by authority, but *crept in by custom;* and that the presbyters of his day *knew* this very well.

(*e*) JEROME states it as a *historical fact*, that the first bishops were made by the *presbyters themselves*, and consequently they could neither have, nor communicate any authority above that of presbyters. '*Afterwards*,' says he, 'to prevent schism, one was *elected* to preside over the rest.' Elected

[139] Apud veteres iidem episcopi et presbuteri fuerint; quia illud nomen dignitatis, est; hoc, aetatis.—*Ep. ad Oceanum*, Vol. IV. p. 648.

and commissioned by whom? By the *presbyters;* for he immediately gives you a broad fact which it is impossible to explain away. 'At Alexandria,' he tells, you, 'from the evangelist Mark to the bishops Heraclas and Dionysius,' *i. e.*, till about the middle of the third century, 'the presbyters *always chose* one of their number, *placed him in a superior station*, and gave him the title of bishop.'

"It is inconceivable how JEROME should tell the bishops to their faces that Christ never gave them any superiority over the presbyters; that custom was their only title; and that the presbyters were perfectly aware of this, unless he was supported by facts which they were unable to contradict. Their silence under his challenges is more than a presumption that they found it wise to let him alone."[140]

The testimony of Jerome affords an authentic record of the *change* that was introduced into the government of the church, and the causes that led to this change, by which the original constitution was wholly subverted. It was in his day a known and acknowledged fact, that prelacy had no authority from Christ or his apostles,—no divine right, to sustain its high pretensions. "The presbyters know that they are subject to their bishops," not by divine right or apostolical succession, but "*by the custom of the church.*" And to the same effect, is the admission of his contemporary, Augustine, the renowned bishop of Hippo, which we give in the words of a distinguished prelate of the church of England, as quoted by Aynton.[141] "The office of a bishop is above the office of a priest [presbyter], not by the authority of Scripture, but after the names of honor, which through the custom of the church have now obtained."[142] Episcopacy,

[140] Mason's Works, Vol. III. pp. 233—251.

[141] Jewel, Defence of his Apology, pp. 122, 123.

[142] Quanquam secundum honorum vocabula quae *jam* ecclesiae usus obtinuit, episcopatus presbyterio major sit; tamen in multis rebus Augustinus Hieronymo minor est.—*Ep. ad Hier.*, 19, alias 83, §33, Op. Vol. II. col. 153.

according to this eminent and ancient prelate, is the result of custom, without any scriptural warrant whatever.

This is in accordance, also, with the authority of Hilary, which has been given above. What a note of triumphant exultation would prelacy raise, did all antiquity offer half as much in defence of her lofty claims as these fathers furnish against them.

The most distinguished of the Greek fathers, also, concur with those of the Latin church, in their views, of the identity of bishops and presbyters. Chrysostom, A. D. 407, in commenting upon the apostles' salutation of the bishops of Philippi, exclaims: "How is this? Were there many bishops in one city? By no means; but he calls the presbyters by this name; for at that time both were so called. The bishop was also called *διάκονος, servant, minister;* for, writing to Timothy, who was bishop, he says, 'make full proof of thy *διακονίαν, ministry.*' He also instructs him to lay hands, as a bishop, suddenly on no man. And again: 'which was given thee by the laying on of the *hands of the presbytery.*' But presbyters [as such] did not lay hands on the bishop. Again, writing to Titus, he says, 'for this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst ordain presbyters in every city as I had commanded thee.' 'If any one be blameless, the husband of one wife.' This he says of a *bishop;* for he immediately proceeds to add, 'a *bishop* must be blameless, as the steward of God, not self-willed.' Wherefore, as I said, presbyters were anciently called bishops and stewards of Christ, and bishops were called presbyters. For this reason, even now, many bishops speak of their *fellow-presbyter*, and *fellow-minister;* and finally, the name of *bishop and presbyter is given to each indiscriminately.*"[143] Again: with reference

[143] *Σὺν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις, τί τοῦτο; μιᾶς πόλεως πολλοὶ ἐπίσκοποι ἦσαν; Οὐδαμῶς· ἀλλὰ τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους οὕτως ἐκάλεσε· τότε γὰρ τέως ἐκοινώνουν τοῖς ὀνόμασι, καὶ διάκονος ὁ ἐπίσκο-*

to Paul, in 1 Tim. 3: 8, Chrysostom says, that "after discoursing of bishops, and showing what qualities they should possess, and from what things they ought to abstain, the apostle proceeds immediately to speak of deacons, passing by the order of presbyters. Why so? Because there is not much distinction between them and bishops. For they also are set for the instruction and government of the church. What he had said of bishops was also applicable to presbyters; they have the superiority merely in the imposition of hands, and in this respect alone take precedence of the presbyters."[144] This was said in relation to the time at which Chrysostom wrote. Even at that late period this eminent prelate

πος ἐλέγετο. Διὰ τοῦτο γράφων καὶ Τιμοθέῳ ἔλεγε· τὴν διακονίαν σου πληροφόρησον, ἐπισκόπῳ ὄντι. ὄντι γὰρ ἐπίσκοπος ἦν, φησὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν χεῖρας ταχέως μηδενὶ ἐπιτίθει· καὶ πάλιν· ὃ ἐδόθη σοι μετὰ ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου· οὐκ ἄν δὲ πρεσβύτεροι ἐπίσκοπον ἐχειροτόνησαν. Καὶ πάλιν πρὸς Τίτον γράφων φησὶ· τούτου χάριν κατέλιπόν σε ἐν Κρήτῃ, ἵνα καταστήσῃς κατὰ πόλιν πρεσβυτέρους, ὡς ἐγώ σοι διεταξάμην· εἴ τις ἀνέγκλητος, μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἀνήρ· ἃ περὶ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου φησί. Καὶ εἰπὼν ταῦτα εὐθέως ἐπήγαγε· δεῖ γὰρ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνέγκλητον εἶναι, ὡς Θεοῦ οἰκονόμον, μὴ αὐθάδη. Ὅπερ οὖν ἔφην, καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τὸ παλαιὸν ἐκαλοῦντο ἐπίσκοποι καὶ διάκονοι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ οἱ ἐπίσκοποι πρεσβύτεροι. ὅθεν καὶ νῦν πολλοὶ συμπρεσβυτέρῳ ἐπίσκοποι γράφουσι, καὶ συνδιακόνῳ· λοιπὸν δὲ τὸ ἰδιάζον ἑκάστῳ ἀπονενέμηται ὄνομα, ὁ ἐπίσκοπος καὶ ὁ πρεσβύτερος.—*Chrysostom, Ep. ad Phil.* Vol. XI. p. 194.

144 Διαλεγόμενος περὶ ἐπισκόπων καὶ χαρακτηρίσας αὐτούς, καὶ εἰπὼν τίνα μὲν ἔχειν, τίνων δὲ ἀπέχεσθαι χρὴ, καὶ τὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τάγμα ἀφεὶς, εἰς τοὺς διακόνους μετεπήδησε. Τί δήποτε; ὅτι οὐ πολὺ μέσον αὐτῶν καὶ τῶν ἐπισκόπων. Καὶ γὰρ καὶ αὐτοὶ διδασκαλίαν εἰσὶν ἀναδεδεγμένοι καὶ προστασίαν τῆς ἐκκλησίας· καὶ ἃ περὶ ἐπισκόπων εἶπε, ταῦτα καὶ πρεσβυτέροις ἁρμόττει· τῇ γὰρ χειροτονίᾳ μόνῃ ὑπερβεβήκασι καὶ τούτῳ μόνον δοκοῦσι πλεονεκτεῖν τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους.—*Ibid., Ep. ad Tim.* 1, Vol. XI. p. 604.

recognizes only a trifling distinction between bishop and presbyter.

Theodoret, also, who lived only a few years later than Chrysostom, exhibits substantially the same sentiments. In relation to the salutation of Paul to the Philippians, c. 1 : 1, he says, "the apostle addresses himself to the priesthood and to the saints who are under them, in which term he includes all who had received baptism. But he calls the presbyters bishops; for they had, at that time the same names, as we learn from the history of the Acts of the Apostles." The writer then proceeds to remark upon the *presbyters* of Ephesus, Acts 20 : 17, who in verse 28 are called *bishops*. From this he goes on to speak of the instructions given to Titus, who was left in Crete, to ordain *presbyters* in every city; but on being directed what persons to choose, he is told that "a *bishop* must be blameless," etc. He then adverts to the fact that the apostle speaks only of two orders, *bishops* and *deacons*, without any mention of presbyters; and of the impossibility of supposing that several bishops could have borne rule in the same city. After this, he proceeds to say; "*so that it is evident that he denominates the presbyters, bishops.*"[145] This sentiment he repeats in remarking upon Phil.

[145] *Πᾶσι τὰ κατ' αὐτὸν ἐπιστέλλει, τοῖς δὲ τῆς ἱερωσύνης ἠξιωμένοις καὶ τοῖς ἀπὸ τούτων ποιμαινομένοις. ἁγίους γὰρ τοὺς τοῦ βαπτίσματος ἀξιωθέντας ὠνόμασεν, ἐπισκόπους δὲ τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους καλεῖ, ἀμφότερα γὰρ εἶχον κατ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν καιρὸν τὰ ὀνόματα. Καὶ τοῦτο ἡμᾶς καὶ ἡ τῶν Πράξεων ἱστορία διδάσκει. Εἰρηκὼς γὰρ ὁ μακάριος Λουκᾶς, ὡς εἰς τὴν Μίλητον τοὺς Ἐφεσίων μετεπέμψατο πρεσβυτέρους ὁ θεῖος ἀπόστολος, λέγει καὶ τὰ πρὸς αὐτοὺς εἰρημένα· προσέχετε γάρ φησιν ἑαυτοῖς καὶ παντὶ ποιμνίῳ, ἐν ᾧ ὑμᾶς ἔθετο τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐπισκόπους, ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ Χριστοῦ· καὶ τοὺς αὐτοὺς καὶ πρεσβυτέρους καὶ ἐπισκόπους ὠνόμασεν. Οὕτω καὶ ἐν τῇ πρὸς τὸν μακάριον Τίτον ἐπιστολῇ· διὰ τοῦτο κατέλιπόν σε ἐν Κρήτῃ, ἵνα καταστήσῃς κατὰ πόλιν πρεσβυτέρους, ὡς ἐγώ σοι διεταξάμην. Καὶ εἰπὼν ὁποίους*

2 : 55; where he says, that "those who, in the beginning of the epistle, are called bishops, evidently belonged to the grade of the presbytery." The passage is given entire in the margin.[146] Again, 1 Tim. 3 : 1, he takes occasion to say, that the apostle "calls the presbyter a *bishop*, as we have had occasion to show in our commentary on the epistle to the Philippians."[147]

The following commentary of the Greek scholiast, of a later date, shows that these views were still retained in the Eastern church. "Inasmuch as the custom of the New Testament especially, of calling bishops presbyters, and presbyters bishops, seems to be silently neglected by the many, it may be shown from Acts 20 : 17; and from the epistle to Titus; and again, from that to the Philippians; and yet again, from the first epistle to Timothy. From the Acts the argument is as follows:—'From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus, and called the *presbyters* of the church.' He called them not bishops; but farther on he says, 'Over which the Holy Ghost hath made you *bishops* to feed the church.'—

εἶναι χρὴ τοὺς χειροτονουμένους ἐπήγαγε· δεῖ γὰρ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνέγκλητον εἶναι, ὡς Θεοῦ οἰκόνομον. Καὶ ἐνταῦθα δὲ δῆλον τοῦτο πεποίηκε· τοῖς γὰρ ἐπισκόποις τοὺς διακόνους συνέζευξε, τῶν πρεσβυτέρων οὐ ποιησάμενος μνήμην· ἄλλως τε οὐδὲ οἷόν τε ἦν πολλοὺς ἐπισκόπους μίαν πόλιν ποιμαίνειν· ὡς εἶναι δῆλον ὅτι τοὺς μὲν πρεσβυτέρους ἐπισκόπους ὠνόμασε.—Theodoret, Ep. ad Phil. p. 445 seq. Vol. III. ed. Halens.

[146] *Πολλὰ καὶ τούτου* (Epaphroditus) *κατορθώματα διεξῆλθεν* (Paulus), *οὐκ ἀδελφὸν μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ συνεργὸν καὶ συστρατιώτην ἀποκαλέσας. Ἀπόστολον δὲ αὐτὸν κέκληκεν αὐτῶν ὡς τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν αὐτῶν ἐμπεπιστευμένον· ὡς εἶναι δῆλον ὅτι ὑπὸ τοῦτον ἐτέλουν οἱ ἐν τῷ προοιμίῳ κληθέντες ἐπίσκοποι, τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου δηλονότι τὴν τάξιν πληροῦντες.—Ibid. Ep. ad Tim.*, p. 459, Vol. III.

[147] *Ἐπίσκοπον δὲ ἐνταῦθα τὸν πρεσβύτερον λέγει, ὡς τὴν πρὸς Φιλιππησίους ἐπιστολὴν ἑρμηνεύοντες ἀπεδείξαμεν.—Ibid.* p. 652.

From the epistle to Titus, 'Having established *presbyters* throughout the churches as I commanded you.'—From the epistles to the Philippians, 'To those that are in Philippi with the *bishop* and deacons.' From the epistle to Timothy the same may be inferred by analogy, when he says, 'If any man desire the office of a *bishop* he desireth a good work;' 'A bishop must be blameless,' etc."[148]

This scholiast has but hinted at the argument from these passages, to which he refers, but he has said enough to show that the doctrine of the ministerial parity of bishops and presbyters was still maintained during the middle ages, in the Eastern church, and justly defended on the authority of the Scriptures.

Elias, archbishop of Crete, A. D. 787, asserts the identity of bishops and presbyters; and, in commenting upon Gregory Nazianzen, remarks, that this bishop, in the fifth century, was accustomed to denominate presbyters, *bishops, antistites*, making no distinction between them;—a circum-

[148] Ἐπειδὴ λανθάνει τοὺς πολλοὺς ἡ συνήθεια, μάλιστα τῆς καινῆς διαθήκης, τοὺς ἐπισκόπους πρεσβυτέρους ὀνομάζουσα καὶ τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους ἐπισκόπους, σημειωτέον τοῦτου ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐκ τῆς πρὸς Τίτον ἐπιστολῆς, ἔτι δὲ καὶ πρὸς Φιλιππησίους καὶ ἐκ τῆς πρὸς Τιμόθεον πρώτης. Ἐκ μὲν οὖν τῶν Πράξεων ἐντεῦθεν ἐστὶ πεισθῆναι περὶ τούτου, γέγραπται γὰρ οὕτως· Ἐκ δὲ τῆς Μιλήτου πέμψας εἰς Ἔφεσον μετεκαλέσατο τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας. Καὶ οὐκ εἴρηκε τοὺς ἐπισκόπους, εἶτα ἐπιφέρει· ἐν ᾧ ὑμᾶς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔθετο ἐπισκόπους, ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν. Ἐκ δὲ τῆς πρὸς Τίτον ἐπιστολῆς· Καταστήσεις κατὰ πόλιν πρεσβυτέρους, ὡς ἐγώ σοι διεταξάμεν. Ἐκ δὲ τῆς πρὸς Φιλιππησίους· Τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Φιλίπποις συνεπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις. Οἶμαι δὲ, ὅτι ἐκ τῆς προτέρας πρὸς Τιμόθενον ἀναλογισάμενος τοῦτο ἐκλαβεῖν· εἴ τις γάρ, φησι, τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ὀρέγεται, καλοῦ ἔργου ἐπιθυμεῖ· δεῖ οὖν τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνεπίληπτον εἶναι.—Cited by Rothe from Salmasius Episcop. et Presb., p. 13.

stance which this scholiast has noticed in many passages from Gregory.[149]

It is truly remarkable how long, and how distinctly, these views of the original identity of bishops and presbyters were retained in the church. Isidorus Hispalensis, bishop of Seville in Spain, in the seventh century, and one of the most learned men of that age, copies with approbation the authority of Jerome given above, as an expression of his own sentiments. He may accordingly be regarded as expressing the sentiments of the Western church at this time.

The views of the church at Alexandria, in the tenth century, have already been expressed in the extract from Eutychius given above.

Bernaldus Constantiensis, about A. D. 1088, a learned monk, and a zealous defender of Gregory VII, after citing Jerome, continues: "Inasmuch, therefore, as bishops and presbyters were anciently the same, without doubt they had the same power to loose and to bind, and *to do other acts which are now the special prerogatives of the bishop.* But after the presbyters began to be restricted by Episcopal preëminence, what was formerly lawful for them became unlawful. Ecclesiastical authority having delegated such prerogatives to the prelates alone."[150]

Even pope Urban II. 1091, says,—"We regard deacons and presbyters as belonging to the sacred order, since these are the only orders which the primitive church is said to have had. For these only have we apostolical authority."[151]

[149] Greg. Naz., Vol. II. p. 830. Ed. Colon. 1590. Also Ed. Basil. 1571, pp. 262, 264.

[150] Quum igitur presbyteri et episcopi antiquitus, idem fuisse legantur etiam eandem ligandi atque solvendi potestatem, et alia nunc episcopis specialia, habuisse non dubitantur. Postquam autem presbyteri ab episcopali excellentia cohibiti sunt, coepit eis non licere quod licuit, videlicet quod ecclesiastica auctoritas solis pontificibus exequendum delegavit.—*De Presbyterorum officio tract.* in monumentorum res Allemannorum illustrant. S. Blas, 1792, 4to. Vol. II. 384 seq.

[151] Sacros autem ordines ducimus diaconatum et presbyteratum.

Gratian again, a benedictine, eminent for his learning and talents, a century later, adopts all the passages cited above from Jerome, ad Tit. 1.[152]

Nicholas Tudeschus, archbishop of Panorma, about A. D. 1423, says :—"Formerly *presbyters* governed the church in common, and *ordained the clergy*."[153]

It is perhaps still more remarkable that even the papal canonist, Jo. Paul Launcelot, A. D. 1570, introduces the passage from Jerome without any attempt to refute it.[154]

Thus all through the middle ages, during the proudest ascendency of prelatical power, the doctrine of the original equality of bishops and presbyters was acknowledged in the Roman Catholic church, as is attested by a succession of the most learned of her clergy.

Gieseler remarks, "That the distinction between the divine and the ecclesiastical appointment, *institutio*, was of less importance in the middle ages than in the modern catholic church, and this view of the original identity of bishops and presbyters, was of no practical importance. It was not till after the Reformation that it was attacked. Michael de Medina, about A. D. 1570, does not hesitate to assert that those fathers were essentially heretics; but adds, that out of respect for these fathers, this heresy in them is not to be condemned. Bellarmine declares this a 'very inconsiderate sentiment.' Thenceforth all catholics, as well as English Episcopalians, maintain an original difference between bishop and presbyter."[155]

Hos siquidem solos primitiva legitur ecclesia habuisse; super his solum preceptum habemus apostoli.—*Conc. Benevent*, an. 1090. can. 1.

[152] (Dist. XCV. c. 5.) Epist. ad Evangel. (Dist. XCIII. c. 24.) and Isidori His. (Dist. XXI. c. 1).

[153] Super prima parte Primi, cap. 5. ed. Lugdun, 1543, fol. 1126. Olim presbyteri in commune regebant ecclesiam et ordinabant sacerdotes.

[154] Institutt. juris Canon. Lib. 1. Tit. 21. § 3.

[155] Comp. especially *Petavii* de ecclesiastica hierarchia Lib. 5, and

In view of the whole course of the argument, then, have we not good and sufficient reasons, for regarding the Episcopal claim of an original distinction between bishops and presbyters, as a groundless assumption? The existence of such a distinction has been denied by prelates, bishops, and learned controversialists, and commentators, both in the Eastern, and Western churches, of every age down to the sixteenth century. It was unknown to those early fathers, who lived nearest to the apostolical age, and some of whom were the immediate successors of the apostles. It was wholly unauthorized by the apostles themselves. On the contrary, they assign to bishops and presbyters the same specific duties. They require in both the same qualifications. They address them by the same names and titles interchangeably and indiscriminately. Are not bishops and presbyters, then, one and the same?—the same in office, in honor, and in power; possessing equally all the prerogatives, rights, and privileges of those pastors and teachers, to whom the apostles, at their decease, resigned the churches, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ? Or must we believe that the presbyter after all is a mere subaltern of the bishop; ordained of God to perform only the humbler offices of the ministry, and to supply the bishop's lack of service? Must we believe moreover, that

dissertatt. theologic. Lib. 1, in his theolog. dogmat. Tom. 4. p. 164. On the other side, *Walonis Messalini*, (Claud. Salmasii) diss. de episcopis et presbyteris. Lugd. Bat. 1641, 8vo. *Dav. Blondelli* apologia pro sententia Hieronymi de episcopis et presbyteris. Amstelod. 1616, 4to. Against these *Henr. Hammondus* dissertatt. IV. quibus episcopatus jura ex sacra scriptura et prima antiquitate adstruuntur. Lond. 1651. The controversy was long continued. On the side of the Episcopalians, *Jo. Pearson*, *Guil. Beveridge*, *Henr Dodwell*, *Jos. Bingham*, *Jac. Usserius*. On that of the Presbyterians, *Jo. Dallaeus*, *Camp. Vitringa*; also the Lutherans, *Joach. Hildebrand*, *Just. Henn. Boehmer*, *Jo. Franc. Buddeus*, *Christ. Math. Pfaff*, etc. Comp. *Jo. Phil. Gabler* de episcopis primae ecclesiae Christ. eorumque origine diss. Jenae, 1805, 4to.

the bishop, this honored and most important dignitary of the church, in whom all clerical grace centres, and to whose hands alone has been intrusted all that authority and power, the proper transmission of which is essential to the perpetuity of the ministry and the just administration of the ordinances,—that this important functionary is but a nameless nondescript, known by no title, represented by no person, or class of persons in the apostolical churches, and having no distinct, specific duties prescribed in the New Testament? All this may be asserted and re-affirmed, as a thousand times it has virtually been; but it can never be proved. It must be received, if received at all, with blind credulity; not on reasonable evidence. Verily this vaunting of high church Episcopacy is an insult to reason;—a quiet complacent assumption, which makes "implicit faith the highest demonstration." If any assertor of these absurd pretensions finds himself disquieted, at any time, by the renewed remonstrances of Scripture, truth and reason, in order to repel these impertinent intruders and restore the equilibrium of his mind, he has only to "shake his head and tell them how superior after all is faith to logic!"

The foregoing chapters give us an outline of that ecclesiastical organization which the churches received from the hands of the apostles, and which was continued in the primitive church for some time after the apostolic age. The government is altogether popular. The sovereign authority is vested in the people. From them all the laws originate; through them they are administered. The government guarantees to all its members the enjoyment of equal rights and privileges, secures to them the right of private judgment, admits of their intervention in all public affairs. It extends to all the right of suffrage. Each community is an independent sovereignty, whose members are subject to no foreign ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Their confessions, formularies and

terms of communion are formed according to their own interpretation of the laws of God; and if the deportment of any one is subject to impeachment, the case is decided by the impartial verdict of his brethren. Their officers are few; and their ministers, equal in rank and power, are the servants, not the lords of the people. The entire polity of the apostolical and primitive churches was framed on the principles, not of a monarchical hierarchy, but of a popular and elective government. In a word, it was a republican government administered with republican simplicity.

This exhibition of the original organization of the Christian church suggests a variety of reflections, some of which we must be permitted, before closing this view of the apostolical and primitive church, to suggest to the consideration of the reader.

REMARKS.

1. The primitive church was organized as a purely religious society.

It had for its object the promotion of the great interests of morality and religion. It interfered not with the secular or private pursuits of its members, except so far as they related to the great end for which the church was formed,—the promotion of pure and undefiled religion. Whenever the Christian church has let itself down to mingle or interfere with the secular pursuits of men, the only result has been her own disgrace, and the dishonor of the great cause which she was set to defend.

2. It employed only *moral means* for the accomplishment of religious ends.

The apostles sought, by kind and tender entreaty, to reclaim the wandering. They taught the church to do the same; and to separate the unworthy from their communion.

But they gave no countenance to the exercise of arbitrary authority over the conduct or the consciences of men. They neither allowed themselves, nor the church, to exercise any other authority than that of the word of God and of Christ, enforced by instruction, by counsel and by admonition. They had ever before them the beautiful idea of a religious fraternity,—its members united in the bonds of faith and mutual affection, and striving together in purity and love for the promotion of godliness.

3. The church was at first free from all entanglement with the state.

It had no affinity with the existing forms of state government, and no connection with them. It vested the church power in the only appropriate source of all social power,—*in the people.* It is only in this voluntary system, in which neither state-power nor church-power can interfere with the religious convictions of men, that the church of Christ finds a guaranty for the preservation of its purity and the exercise of its legitimate influence.

But the church soon began to be assimilated to the form of the existing civil governments, and in the end a "hierarchy of bishops, metropolitans, and patriarchs arose, corresponding to the graduated rank of the civil administration. Ere-long the Roman bishop assumed pre-eminence above all others."[157] United with the civil authority in its interests, assimilated to that power in its form of government, and secularized in its spirit, the church, under Constantine and his successors, put off its high and sacred character, and became a part of the machinery of state government. It first truckled to the low arts of state policy, and afterwards, with insatiable ambition, assumed the supreme control of all power, human and divine.

4. It was another advantage of the system of the primitive

[157] Ranke's Hist. of the Popes, Eng. Trans., Vol. I. p. 29.

church, that it was fitted to any form of civil government, and to any state of society.

Voluntary and simple in their organization, entirely removed from all connection with the civil government, with no confederate relations among themselves, and seeking only by the pure precepts of religion to persuade men in every condition to lead quiet and holy lives, these Christian societies were adapted to any state of society and any form of government. This primitive Christianity commended itself, with equal facility, to the rich and the poor, the learned and the unlearned, the high and the low; whether it addressed itself to the soldier, the fisherman or the peasant, it equally suited their condition. It gathered into its communion converts from every form of government, of every species of superstition, and of every condition in life, and by its wholesome truths and simple rites trained them up for eternal life. Stern and uncompromising in its purity and simplicity, it stood aloof from all other forms, both of government and of religion. It neither sought favor from the prejudice of the Gentile, nor the bigotry of the Jew. It yielded compliance neither to the despotism of Rome, nor to the democracy of Greece, while it could live and flourish under either government and in any state of society. Can the same be said with equal propriety of Episcopacy? Are its complicated forms and ceremonials, its robes and vestments, its rituals, and all its solemn pomp, equally adapted to every state of religious feeling, or suited alike to refined society, and to rude and rustic life? Are all its complicated forms of government, its grades of office, its diocesan and metropolitan confederacies, and its monarchical powers, equally congenial with every kind of civil government?

5. It subjected the clergy to salutary restraints by bringing them, in their official character, under the watch of the church.

The apostles, as we have already seen, recognized their

own accountability to the church. This continued afterwards to be an established principle in the primitive church. The consciousness that their whole life was open to the judicial inspection of those to whom they ministered, and by whom they were most intimately known, could not fail to create in the clergy a salutary circumspection, the restraints of which, an independent ministry under another system can never feel.

6. It served to guard them also against the workings of an unholy ambition, a thirst for office, and the love of power.

This thought is necessarily implied in the preceding, but it is of such importance that it deserves a distinct consideration. Those disgraceful contests for preferment, the recital of which crowds the page of history, belong to a later age and a different ecclesiastical polity.

7. It tended also to guard the clergy against a mercenary spirit.

The vast wealth of a church-establishment, and the princely revenues of its incumbents, offer an incentive to this sordid passion which Paul in his poverty could never have felt, and which none can ever feel, who are contented to receive only a humble competence, as a voluntary offering at the hands of those for whom they labor.

8. The system was well suited to guard the church from the evils of a sectarian spirit.

In the church of Christ were Jews, jealous for the law of their fathers. There were also Greeks, who, independent of the Mosaic economy, had received the gospel and become Christians, without being Jews in spirit. Had now the church assumed the form of a national establishment, with its prescribed articles of faith, its ritual, etc., it is difficult to conceive how the opposing views of these different parties could have been harmonized. The older apostles, with the Jews, might have maintained with greater firmness their Jewish prejudice as they observed the pure direction of Chris-

tianity in Paul and his Gentile converts, who again might have been more determined in their opposition to a Judaizing spirit. So that these germinating differences might have ended in an irreconcilable opposition. As it was, this disturbing influence was strongly manifested in all the churches, so that it required all the wisdom and influence of the apostles to unite their Christian converts in an organization so simple as that which they did establish.

9. It left the apostles and pastors free to pursue their great work, without let or hindrance from ecclesiastical authority or partizan zeal.

It allowed free scope for the fervid zeal of the early promulgators of the gospel of Christ, and permitted them to range at large in their missionary tours for the conversion of men, unrestrained by the rules of ecclesiastical authority or canonical laws. An explanation, given and received in the spirit of mutual confidence, reconciled the brethren whose prejudice was excited by the preaching of Peter to the Gentiles. The unhappy division between Paul and Barnabas ended in the furtherance of the gospel, both being at liberty, notwithstanding this sinful infirmity, to prosecute their labors for the salvation of men without being arrested by the ban of a hierarchy, or trammelled by ecclesiastical jealousy, lest the souls whom one or the other should win to Christ, might chance not to be canonically converted.

10. The order of the primitive church was calculated to preserve peace and harmony among the clergy.

One in rank and power, and holding the tenure of their office at the will of their people, they had few temptations, comparatively, to engage in strife one with another for preferment; or to repine at the advancement of one of their number, who by his superior qualifications was promoted to some commanding post of usefulness above them.

We know indeed that Jerome assigns the origin of Episcopacy to the ambitious contentions of the clergy in the

primitive church; as though this were an expedient to heal their divisions. Now, if this be true, we have only to say, that the remedy proved to be infinitely worse than the evil which it would cure. All the ecclesiastical historians of antiquity most fully and strongly attest the fact, that after the rise of diocesan Episcopacy, and the establishment of the various grades of the hierarchy, the spirit of faction rose high among the clergy. Insatiable ambition possessed all orders among the priesthood, raging like a pestilence through their several ranks. The age of Constantine and his successors, within which the system of prelacy was matured, was pre-eminently the age of clerical ambition.

"In the age we speak of, which seems too justly styled *ambitionis saeculum*, the age of ambition,—though those, whose designs agree with the humor of it, have esteemed it most imitable,—scarce any in the church could keep their own, that had any there greater than themselves; some bishops, and not only the presbyters found it so, the *great* still encroaching upon those, whose *lower* condition made them obnoxious to the ambition and usurpation of the more potent.

"In that unhappy time, what struggling was there in bishops of all sorts for more greatness and larger power! What tugging at councils and court for these purposes!"[158]

Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian, A. D. 439, alleges that he has intermingled the history of the *wars* of those times, *as a relief* to the reader, that he may not be continually detained with the ambitious contentions, φιλονικίᾳ, of the bishops, and their plots and counter-plots against each other.[159] But more of this hereafter.

11. It was also happily suited to ensure to the people a useful and efficient ministry.

Select a few from among their ministerial brethren, exalt

[158] Clarkson's Primitive Episcopacy, pp. 142, 143.
[159] Introduction to Lib. 5.

them to the high places of Episcopal power, encircle them with the mitre, the robe, and all the "paraphernalia of pontifical dignity," enthrone them securely in authority, settle them quietly in their palaces to enjoy the ample benefices of an irresponsible office; and, however gratifying may be the favors which you have bestowed, you have done little to advance their ministerial usefulness.

Besides, the days of a bishop's activity and usefulness soon pass away, but his *office* still remains. Though passed into "the sere and yellow leaf of age," he bears his blushing honors still upon him. In the circumstances of the case, indeed, he can scarcely be expected to resign his office; neither can he, it should seem, even if he would; for "when once made bishop, and when he has thus received the indelible, invisible mark of Episcopal grace, he is absolutely shut up to the necessity of continuing in office, however unworthy or unfit he may prove or find himself to be."[160]

What an incumbrance to the ministrations of the truth as it is in Jesus, again, are the forms, and rites, and observances of the Episcopal service. Here are *thirty-six* festivals, and *one hundred* fasts, as specified in the prayer book, annually claiming the attention of the preacher. Then there is the "holy catholic church;" the mysteries of the sacraments, baptismal regeneration, and the awful presence in the

[160] Constit. and Canons of Prot. Epis. Church, pp. 301, 303. "So far," says Dr. Hawks, "as our research has extended, this law is without a precedent in the history of the Christian church. We may be mistaken, but we believe that ours is the first church in Christendom, that ever legislated for the express purpose of preventing Episcopal resignations; for this canon prescribes so many restrictions, that the obstacles render it almost impossible for a bishop to lay down his jurisdiction. The matter is one which the practice of the church has heretofore left to be settled between God and the conscience of the bishops; and it may well be questioned, whether it be not best in all cases, there to leave it."—*Cited from Smyth's Eccl. Republicanism*, p. 167.

elements of the eucharist; the holy order of bishops; "the ascending orders of the hierarchy;" "the most excellent liturgy;" the validity of Episcopal ordination, "covenant mercies," etc. etc., all pressing their claims on the attention of the Episcopal minister, and demanding a place in the ministrations of the pulpit.

Add to these the sublimer doctrines of prelacy. Let him begin to discourse about apostolic succession, divine right, postures, attitudes, "wax candles, altar-cloths, chaplets, crosses, crucifixes, and mummery of all kinds,"—and it is not difficult to conjecture what place the great doctrine of Christ and him crucified must hold in his teachings, or what efficacy his ministry will have in winning souls to Christ by the preaching of the truth as it is in Jesus. So it was with the mediaeval church. "No one can read the writings of the fathers, without feeling that they gradually became more intent on the circumstantials of religion than on the essence of it; more solicitous about the modes in which religious duties should be performed, than about the spirit of them. It is all over with religion when this is the case."

But how different from all this was the ministry of Christ and of the apostles. Armed with the panoply of heaven,—the word of God alone, the sword of the spirit,—the first preachers of the Christian religion went forth, conquering and to conquer. By the simple instrumentality of the word, mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, they quickly spread the triumphs of the cross through every land and carried up their conquests to the very throne of the Cæsars. Be ours a religion that creates and enjoys such a ministry.

12. This primitive system served to make an efficient laity.

Instead of excluding them from the concerns of the church, like some other forms of church government, and requiring of them chiefly to attend to their forms of wor-

ship and pay their taxes, this primitive system of ecclesiastical polity devolved upon the members of the church the duties of discipline, and the care of the church. It trained them to live and to care for the interests of religion. It quickened their graces, by calling them into habitual exercise. It gave an efficient practical character to their religion. Look at those churches in England and America which bear the closest resemblance to this primitive organization. Observe their members in the private walks of life. Look at their efficiency in missionary operations, their noble charities, and their generous labors in every department of Christian benevolence. They are not merely devout worshippers within the church, and decent moralists without, but everywhere eminently intelligent, efficient and liberal. They *serve* God as well as worship him. Not content merely to cultivate the private virtues of the Christian, the laity gain a habit of counselling and acting for the church and for their fellow-men, which gives to their religion an enterprising, practical, business character. An absolute government, on the other hand, whether civil or religious, which separates the people from participation in its administration, forms in them the habit of living and caring only for themselves; and the result is a retiring, negative character, a servile, selfish spirit. The impress of a despotic government upon the character of a people is as clear as the light of the sun in the heavens; and, so long as like causes produce similar effects, the results of a spiritual despotism may be seen in an inactive, inefficient laity. Noble examples to the contrary there may be; just as there may be found individuals of generous impulses and lofty aspirations, in those countries whose government is most despotic, who burst away from the thraldom of their condition, and rise superior to the enervating, depressing influences, which act disastrously upon men of ordinary minds. But the general character of any peo-

ple is moulded and formed by the government, civil and religious, under which they live.

Of drones, monks, sinecurists, and cloistered Christians even, content in seclusion to cultivate merely the retired virtues of private life, careless of a world lying in wickedness, so they may themselves but safely be raised to heaven at last —of all such the church has had enough. But the true church of Christ demands men who shall not forget to do good, and to communicate to all men as they may have opportunity.[161] Her present exigencies call for *working-men*, in the best sense of the phrase; men who shall live, not unto themselves, but for their Lord and Master, and for the souls which he has redeemed by his own blood. And that is the best religious system, which trains, in the happiest manner and in greatest numbers, such working-men for the church of Christ.

[161] The superior liberality and enterprise of those religious denominations now under consideration, is noticed by a correspondent in a late number of the Episcopal Recorder.

"O, that we had the zeal of some other denominations of Christians, against whom we too often boast ourselves, but whose liberality puts our penuriousness to open shame. It is but a few days since a single firm in this city, consisting of three members, gave $15,000 to sustain the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of New York, yet Bishop McIlvaine, wanting little more than this same sum, to relieve one of the noblest of the institutions of our church, has to beg from city to city, from rich to poor, and is at this moment in anxious suspense whether his mission may not fail, because men are lovers of their own selves, instead of being constrained by the love of Christ to give freely of what they have so freely received. It may be stated as a humiliating fact, showing the low estate of our church, that no sum above $250 has yet been received from any one in aid of Kenyon College, though numbers reside in this city who could cancel the debt themselves, and never feel the loss of so trifling a sum. When shall we see men awakening to a sense of their responsibility and their stewardship to God? When shall we hear them exclaim, with Zaccheus, 'Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor?'"—*Epis. Rec.* Oct. 21, 1843.

"When every good Christian, thoroughly acquainted with all those glorious privileges of sanctification and adoption, which render him more sacred than any dedicated altar or element, shall be restored to his right in the church, and not excluded from such place of spiritual government as his Christian abilities and his approved good life in the eye and testimony of the church shall prefer him to, this and nothing sooner will open his eyes to a wise and true valuation of himself, which is so requisite and high a point of Christianity, and will stir him up to walk worthy the honorable and grave employment wherewith God and the church hath dignified him, not fearing lest he should meet with some outward holy thing in religion which his lay touch or presence might profane, but lest something unholy from within his own heart should dishonor and profane in himself that priestly unction and clergy-right whereto Christ hath entitled him. Then would the congregation of the Lord soon recover the true likeness and visage of what she is indeed, a holy generation, a royal priesthood, a saintly communion, the household and city of God. And this I hold to be another considerable reason why the functions of church government ought to be free and open to any Christian man, though never so laic, if his capacity, his faith, and prudent demeanor commend him. And this the apostles warrant us to do."[162]

13. Such a system of religion as that which we have been contemplating, harmonizes with and fosters our free institutions.

In the same state, the forms of civil and ecclesiastical government will be in harmony with each other. There is a mutual relation and adaptation between our free, republican government and a popular ecclesiastical organization like that of the apostolical and primitive church. Such a system harmonizes with our partialities and prejudices; it coincides with our national usages; it is congenial with all our civil in-

[162] Milton's Prose Works, Vol. I. p. 167.

stitutions. This is a consideration of great importance. It is enough of itself to outweigh, a thousand-fold, all that has ever been urged in favor of prelacy. Indeed, the spiritual despotism of that system, its absolute monarchical powers, constitute one strong objection to it. It is the religion of despots and tyrants. Such in its papal form it has always been; and such, we cannot doubt, is still one inherent characteristic of high, exclusive Episcopacy, however it may be modified by circumstances. The church of England, from the time of its establishment, says Macaulay, "continued to be, for more than one hundred and fifty years, the servile handmaid of monarchy, the steady enemy of public liberty."[163] James, the tyrant of that age, uniformly silenced every plea in behalf of the Puritans, with the significant exclamation, "No bishop, no king." So indispensable is the hierarchy to a monarchy. But in a free republic it is a monstrous anomaly.

On the other hand, be it remembered, "the New Testament is emphatically a republican book. It sanctions no privileged orders; it gives no exclusive rights. All, who imbibe its spirit and obey its precepts, are recognized as equals; children of the same Father; brethren and sisters in Christ, and heirs to a common inheritance. In the spirit of these kind and endearing relations, the first Christians formed themselves into little republican communities, acknowledging no head but Jesus Christ, and regulating all their concerns by mutual consultation and a popular vote of the brotherhood. In these distinct and independent societies was realized for the first time in this world the perfect idea of civil and religious liberty.

"The Puritans imbibed the same spirit, and derived their principles from the same pure source of light, of holiness and freedom. They modeled their churches after the primitive form, and founded them on the basis of entire independence and equality of rights. Twice in their native land had they

[163] Miscellanies, Boston ed. 1. p. 249.

saved the British constitution from being crushed by the usurpations of the Stuarts; and Hume, who was never backward to reproach both their character and their principles, is compelled to acknowledge that what of liberty breathes in that constitution is to be ascribed to the influence of the Puritans.[164] These were the men who settled New-England. They came here bearing in their bosoms the sacred love of liberty and religion; and ere they left the little bark that had borne them across the ocean, they formed themselves 'into a civil body politic,' having for its basis this fundamental principle, that they *should be ruled by the majority*. Here is brought out the grand idea of a free, elective government. Here is the germ of that tree of liberty which now rears its lofty top to the heavens, spreading its branches over the length and breadth of our land, and under whose shade seventeen millions of freemen are reposing. The spirit of all our free, civil, and religious institutions was in the breasts of our pilgrim fathers.

"How striking is the resemblance between the churches planted by the apostles, and those established in this land by our venerated fathers? Well may we believe them, when they say, that the primitive, apostolic churches were the only pattern they had in their eye in organizing the churches of New-England. They certainly well understood their pattern and were singularly happy in imitating it."[165]

"Many more graceful and more winning forms of human

[164] "So absolute, indeed, was the authority of the crown, that the precious spark of liberty had been kindled and was preserved by the Puritans; and it was to this sect, whose principles appear so frivolous, and habits so ridiculous, that the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution." Again, "It was only during the next generation that the noble principles of liberty took root, and spreading themselves under the shelter of Puritanical absurdities, became fashionable among the people.—*Hume's Eng.* Vol. V. pp. 183, 469.

[165] Hawes's Tribute to the memory of the Pilgrims, pp. 61—63, 83, 84.

nature there have been, and are, and shall be; many men, many races there are, and have been, and shall be, of more genial dispositions, more tasteful accomplishments, a quicker eye for the beautiful of art and nature, less disagreeably absorbed, less gloomily careful and troubled about the mighty interests of the spiritual being, or of the commonwealth. . . . But where, in the long series of ages that furnish the matter of history, was there ever one,—*where one*, better fitted by the possession of the highest traits of man, to do the noblest work of man; better fitted to consummate and establish the Reformation,—to save the English constitution, at its last gasp, from the fate of other European constitutions, and prepare, on the granite and iced mountain summits of the new world, a still better rest for a still better liberty?"[166]

In conclusion, we would acknowledge, with devout gratitude to God, the rich inheritance which we have received from our puritan forefathers, in the religious institutions which they have transmitted to us.

They have given us a religion, more nearly allied, both in spirit and in form, to scriptural Christianity, than any other that has ever risen upon the world,—a religion, more abundant in blessings, and more highly to be prized than any other; a religion, from which the whole American system, with all its institutions, social, civil and religious, has arisen. Our pilgrim fathers, while at anchor off our coast, and before they set foot upon these shores, after solemn prayer to the God of nations, entered mutually into a solemn compact, on board the Mayflower, to establish a government here "for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith." With this intent they landed and entered upon their great work, as if conscious of their high destiny, reared up by God to establish and extend those principles of civil and religious freedom which they had so nobly defended in their

[166] Speech of Hon. Rufus Choate before N. Eng. Soc. N. York, Dec. 25, 1843.

father-land. There they had suffered the loss of all things and shed their blood, freely, in their inflexible adherence to these principles. Harassed and wearied, but not dismayed, by their continual bonds, imprisonments, and persecutions at home, and by their exile abroad, they resolved to seek an asylum in the wilderness of the new world, where, in peaceful seclusion, they might establish a government 'for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith.' The Bible was their statute-book; and their religion, that primitive Christianity which God gave to the world through the medium of our Lord and his apostles. In fulfilment of their design, their first care was to set up the tabernacle of the Lord in this wilderness. They erected the church, and fast by this the school-house; then the court-house, the academy, the college, while yet they were of one faith and one name. No other form of religion was known, in this land of the pilgrims, until the great principles of the American system were developed, and established here by our puritan forefathers.

The truth is, they were no ordinary men. They lived for no ordinary purpose. They were men, the most remarkable that the world has ever produced. They lived for a nobler end, for a higher destiny than any others that have ever lived. These are the men to whom New-England owes her religion with all the blessings, social, civil, and literary, that follow in its train. These are the venerable men whose blood still flows in our veins, and into whose inheritance we have entered. Peace to their silent shades. Fragrant as the breath of morning be their memory. The winds of two centuries have swept over their graves. The effacing hand of time has well nigh worn away the perishable monuments which may have marked the spot where sleeps their honored dust. But they still live. They live in the immortal principles which they taught;—in the enduring institutions which they established. They live in the remembrance of a grateful posterity; and they will live

on, through all time, in the gratitude of unborn generations, who, in long succession, shall rise up and call them blessed. And shall we, "who keep the graves, and bear the names, and boast the blood" of these men, disown their church, or cast out as evil, and revile their religion? No; by the memory of these noble men; by their holy lives, their heavenly principles, their sacred institutions; by the sustaining strength which they themselves are still giving to our own freedom, and to the great cause of civil and religious liberty throughout the earth,—let us never give up the religion of our fathers. No, never, never!

But we have seen of late years several young men, of a certain cast of character, annually straying away from the fold of their fathers, and coldly exchanging their own religious birthright for a more imposing ritual, encumbered with a mass of anti-scriptural ceremonials, and withal, sadly deficient in the means of spiritual improvement. And other young aspirants there may be, recreant to the faith of their fathers, and eager to follow in the footsteps of their apostatizing predecessors. Well, be it so. If there be any who find themselves seized with a desire to forsake the altar and communion of their fathers, and to consign their sainted ancestors, together with their kindred according to the flesh, and their brethren in Christ, with whom they have often sat at the table of the Lord,—the very lambs of the flock it may be, whom they themselves have gathered into the fold of Christ, and sought gently to lead in the path of life,—if, I say, they can now leave all these, with "cool atrocity," to "uncovenanted mercy,"—if such be the humor of their mind, be it so; but if they have yet an ear to hear, there is a voice of gentle admonition to which they do well to give heed. From the dying lips of puritan ancestry it calls to them in tones of kind but earnest remonstrance, "We do earnestly testify that if any who are given to change, do rise up to unhinge the well established churches in this land, it will be the duty and inter-

est of the churches to examine whether the men of this trespass are more prayerful, more zealous, more patient, more heavenly, more universally conscientious, and harder students and better scholars, and more willing to be informed and advised, than those great and good men who left unto the churches what they now enjoy. If they be not so, it will be wisdom to forbear pulling down, with their own hands, the houses of God which were built by their wiser fathers, until they have better satisfaction." [159]

[159] Rev. John Higginson and Rev. William Hubbard.

CHAPTER VII.

RISE OF EPISCOPACY.

At what period the republican principle, in the primitive church, began to give place to the aristocratic and monarchical element, is not distinctly known. It is, however, admitted by Dean Waddington, "that the spirit of religion and the first government of the church was popular;" and that "the Episcopal government was clearly not yet established," at the close of the first century, when Clement wrote. Riddle makes essentially the same concession; and with him many other Episcopalians. Such, indeed, seems to be the acknowledged opinion of that class of this denomination who disclaim the doctrine of the divine right of Episcopacy.

On the other hand, it is generally conceded that the popular form of government in the church, began gradually to change into one more despotic, soon after the age of the apostles. Those changes in the organization of the apostolical churches, which finally terminated in the Episcopal system, began, in the opinion of some, as early as the first half of the second century. Many others, with greater probability, refer the commencement of the transition to the *second half* of the same century. Nothing appears in history to define with precision the period when the change in question began. It was doubtless different in different churches. Resulting gradually, and almost imperceptibly, from many causes, it was unnoticed at first, or left unrecorded in the scanty records of that early period which still remain.

The Episcopal hierarchy had its origin undoubtedly in what may be denominated the parochial system. This term denotes the intermediate state of the church, in its transition from the primitive, apostolical form, to that of the diocesan confederacy. The churches, in the principal towns, gradually gained a controlling influence over those which were planted in the country around. And the clergy of these central churches came, by degrees, into similar relations to their brethren in the country. So that both minister and people of the city became, through the operation of various causes, the centre of influence and power over the feeble churches which gradually sprang up in the neighboring country. The church of the metropolis became, in the quaint style of church history, the mother-church, to smaller, dependent fraternities in the country; and the clerical head of this church, the principal man among his brethren, the presiding officer of their assemblies and councils. This accidental ascendency of the central church, and of its clergy, led on to the rapid development of the Episcopal system; and, finally, ended in the overthrow of the popular government of the primitive church.

This chapter, therefore will be devoted to a consideration of the causes which gave, both to the churches and to the bishops of the principal cities, that increasing ascendency and power, from which we trace the rise of Episcopacy.

I. Of the ascendency of the churches in the cities over those in the country.

The gospel was first preached in large cities and towns, such as Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, and Corinth. Here were the earliest churches founded. These churches now became central points of effort and of influence for the extension of Christianity in the region round about. The apostles themselves, sometimes made such missionary excursions into the neighboring towns and villages, Acts 8: 25. 9: 32. Similar efforts were doubtless continued and greatly extended, by

the pastors and converts of those central churches. The promptings of Christian benevolence naturally directed them to such efforts. Clement represents the apostles to have established churches, in this manner, both in the cities and in the country.

The early Christians were often dispersed abroad, also, by persecution; and, like the first Christians, Acts 8: 4, "went everywhere preaching the word."

Strangers and visiters in the principal cities, where the gospel was preached, also frequently became converts to Christ, and returned home to make known his gospel, as they might have opportunity and ability in the places where they resided.

Whatever the means may have been, it is an acknowledged historical fact, that the Christian religion continued to spread with wonderful rapidity during the first century; and that by the close of this period it had pervaded, not only the principal cities, but the country also, in many provinces of the Roman empire. Pliny, A. D. 103 or 104, in the remote province of Bithynia, complains that "this contagious superstition was not confined to the cities only, but had spread its infection through the country villages."[1] These new Christian converts in the surrounding country, while yet few and feeble, became of course members of the neighboring church. The parent-church became a great parish spreading out over an indefinite extent of country, and having several subordinate branches in connection with it, and more or less dependent upon it, over which it exerted a sustaining and controlling influence.

For a time, Dr. Campbell supposes that these converts in the villages received pastoral instruction, and the elements of the eucharist, from persons sent out for that purpose from the city; but that all continued to come into the city to wor-

[1] Ep. Lib. 10. 97.

ship. Such also is the representation of Justin Martyr, who says, "that on the day which was called Sunday, all that live in the city *and in the country* come together in the same place,"[2] for religious worship.

When, in process of time, it became expedient for Christian converts in the country to have separate places of worship, these new organizations took the form of the parent church, and still looked to that for instruction and support as they might need. The new churches bore, indeed, a striking resemblance to the "chapels of ease" in England; having a similar dependence upon the mother-church. This dependence gave rise to a gradual connection and coalition, between the churches in the country, and the central church in the city. In this connection and coalition, between the original church and the smaller ones that sprang up around it, began that change in the original organization of the apostolical churches which gave rise to the Episcopal system; and, which in the end, totally subverted the primitive simplicity and freedom in which the churches were at first founded. This dependence and consequent coalition was the result of various natural causes and local circumstances which claim a more specific enumeration.

1. The churches in the country were only branches of the parent stock, and owned a filial relation to the mother church.

2. They received their first spiritual teachers and pastors from this church; and these would naturally retain their attachment to the church from which they came, and use their influence to unite with it that to which they went.

3. The connection between the country and the city, in the ordinary course of business, had its influence in bringing the churches in the country into connection with that in the city.

4. The persecution, and consequent distress which came

[2] Apol. c. 67. p. 83.

upon the churches, brought them into closer connection one with another.

5. The city was the centre of political influence and power, for the government and protection of the country. This consideration had its influence in promoting a similar relation between the churches in the city, and those in the country.—The people had long been subject to the civil authority which was concentrated in the city; and on this account they yielded the more readily to a similar control from the same quarter over the affairs of the church.

6. The church itself was deservedly the object of respect. It had been founded, it may be, by one of the apostles, and still enjoyed the ministry of a successor placed at a short remove from them, to whom it was natural to look for counsel and support.

"An ancient custom obtained, of attributing to those churches which had been founded by the apostles a superior degree of honor, and a more exalted dignity. On which account it was for the most part usual, when any dispute arose respecting principles or tenets, for the opinion of these churches to be asked; as, also, for those who entered into discussion of any matters connected with religion, to refer, in support of their positions, to the voice of the apostolic churches. We may, therefore, very readily perceive the reason which, in cases of doubt and controversy, caused the Christians of the West to have recourse to the church of Rome; those of Africa, to that of Alexandria; and those of Asia, to that of Antioch for their opinion; and which, also, occasioned these opinions to be, not unfrequently regarded in the light of laws, namely, that these churches had been planted, reared up and regulated, either by the hand or under the immediate care of some one, or more of the apostles themselves."[3]

7. The city-church was comparatively rich and powerful; and could administer to the wants of the feeble churches as

[3] Mosheim, De Rebus Christ., Saec. II. § 21.

they might need. For this reason, especially in times of distress and persecution, they clung as closely as possible to the parent-church.

8. Protection and aid from the civil authority was chiefly to be sought through the same medium. The minister of the city could apply in their behalf to the Roman governors who resided there. Or if a direct application was inexpedient, there were still many ways and means, by which to operate secretly upon the magistrates, and their subordinate officers, for the advantage of the churches in the country. Christian converts were not unfrequently entrusted with some civil office, in which they could aid their brethren in the country.

Thus, in various ways, the churches in the large cities, in process of time, gathered about them several smaller churches in the vicinity, over which they extended their guardianship and care. The clergy of the central churches had a controlling influence over those in the neighborhood, which was conceded to them by common consent; and which in reality was not at first oppressive, but beneficial to the subordinate churches. It was, however, a silent surrender of their original and inherent right as independent bodies; and led on to an entire change in the ecclesiastical polity of the primitive church, as established by the apostles.

The above representations disclose the true origin of that ecclesiastical aristocracy which succeeded to the popular government of the apostolical churches. They exhibit the rise of the diocesan form of government, not as based on any 'theory of the church,' but as the result of the mutual relations of the churches in the country to that in the city. The church of the metropolis gradually spread itself out as an extensive parish over the adjacent territory. And the bishop of this city became, virtually, the bishop over the same extent of country. "Was it not natural," says Planck, after alluding to many of the circumstances above-mentioned, "was

it not natural, and according to the ordinary course of things to make a distinction between the bishop of the city, and the other clergy? Would not they themselves, cheerfully make the distinction, and give him special tokens of their consideration? Would they not accost him with peculiar respect; and by silent consent, give him the pre-eminence? And would he not, on the other hand, requite all this by his manifold services? Hence arose those new relations which laid the foundation for the metropolitan system."[4]

Throughout the second and third centuries, there was no established law or rule, binding the smaller churches in a coalition with the greater, or bringing them into subjection to it. It was wholly a conventional arrangement, a matter of expediency and convenience, resulting from various circumstances that have already been detailed. But that which at first was conceded voluntarily, was afterwards claimed as a right. Conventional usage became established law; the controlling influence of the bishop, an official prerogative; and thus, in the end, the diocesan form of government was settled upon the church.

Siegel and Ziegler have given two examples from Fuchs, in illustration of these relations between the parent church and those of the country adjacent. It appears that a question had arisen between the bishop of Nice and the bishop of Nicomedia respecting the jurisdiction of Basilinopolis, a small city in the neighborhood of Nice. This city was originally a small village, but had so increased as to be invested by Justinian with the rights and privileges of a city, and as such belonged to the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of Nicomedia. But, as a village adjacent to Nice, according to the views above stated, it was under the jurisdiction of the bishop of Nice, who had himself ordained the presbyter of Basilinopolis as a bishop in accordance with the old order of things, and

[4] Gesellschafts-Verfass., I. S. 82, 83. Comp. also, 546—562, respecting this system at a later period.

in direct violation of the metropolitan rights of the bishop of Nicomedia, who claimed the exclusive right to ordain bishops in his own province. The only defence which the bishop of Nice could offer, was to claim jurisdiction over it on the ground of its relation to Nice; it having formerly belonged to the precincts of that city as a neighboring and dependent church. The instance goes to show that such relations had existed, and were still regarded as valid, even under the metropolitan system then in force.

The second example is derived from the region of the Mareotis, near Alexandria. In this whole extent of country so late as the fourth century, there was no bishop, or rural bishop, *chorepiscopus;* but only presbyters, who were under the jurisdiction of the bishop of Alexandria; and so jealous was he of his prerogative, that he had refused, for this length of time, any other ministry to the churches of the Mareotis than that of presbyters.

The same state of things is apparent from the relations of the presbyters in the city to the bishop, in contrast with those of presbyters in the country. When in process of time, several distinct churches were found in a given city, the presbyters of these churches refused themselves to acknowledge a subordination to the bishop similar to that of the presbyters in the country. They claimed an equality with him. They had elected him from their own number; and they continued to regard him only as *primus inter pares;* and, as ministers in the metropolis, claimed precedence over those in the country. Thus in the letter of the Arians to Alexander, the bishop and *all the clergy* of Alexandria first affix their signature. Then follows that of three bishops from other parts of Egypt; all which serves to illustrate the subordination of the clergy in the country to those in the city.

This view of the subject is not new; nor is it put forth as original with the writer. It has the sanction of many authors

from whom the above particulars have been derived. Of these, it is sufficient to mention, Spittler,[5] Pertsch,[6] Mosheim,[7] Planck,[8] Neander,[9] Guerike,[10] Siegel,[11] Schoene,[12] W. Böhmer,[13] D'Aubigné.[14]

II. Of the early ascendency of the bishops in the cities over those in the country.

In close connection with the foregoing changes in the government of the churches and in their relations to each other, there were others which were equally influential in disturbing the mutual relations which had hitherto subsisted, both among the clergy and between the bishop of the city and the clergy in the country.

1. Of these changes, the most important is the division of the clergy into the separate orders of *bishops* and *presbyters*. The ordinary priesthood, as established under the apostles, constituted, as we have seen, but one class or order; and were denominated, indiscriminately and interchangeably, bishops and presbyters. The great historian, to whom the reader is indebted for the Introduction which stands at the head of this volume, ascribes the origin of this distinction to the second century, and its full development to a period considerably later.[15] Waiving, in this place, the further discussion of this vexed question, we will here state the origin of this distinction, according to Siegel and others, as a fair expression

[5] Can. Rechts. § 4—10.
[6] Ib. § 17—23, und Kirchen Hist., Sec. II.
[7] De Rebus Christ. Saec., II. § 37, note 3.
[8] Gesell. Verfass. S. 18—83, 546—572.
[9] Allgem. Kirchen Gesch. 1. 2d ed. S. 314—316.
[10] Ib. S. 95—97.
[11] Kirchliche Verfass. 2. S. 454—473; 4. S. 378.
[12] Geschichtsforschungen, Vol. 3. S. 336—340. See also, Conc. Carthag. c. 31. Bracar. c. 1. Agath. c. 53. Tarracon. c. 8.
[13] Alterthumswissenschaft. 1. S. 230—236.
[14] Hist. of Reformation. Vol. 1. p. 18. N. Y. 1843.
[15] Comp. his Apost. Gesch. 1, 50, 198 seq, 406. Allgem. Kirch. 1, 327, 328, 2d ed.

of the prevailing views of those who deny the original superiority of the bishop and the apostolical origin of Episcopacy.

There was at first but one church in a city, to which all the Christian converts belonged. But the care of the church was entrusted, not to one man, but to several, who constituted a *college of presbyters*, and divided the duties of their office among themselves. This arrangement was analogous to that of the Jewish synagogue, after which the church was organized. A plurality of persons everywhere appear in the Acts as the representatives of the church at Jerusalem. They represent, also, the church at Ephesus, Acts 20: 17—28; and at Philippi, Phil. 1: 1. Titus was also instructed to ordain *elders* in all the cities in Crete. In such a college of elders sharing a joint responsiblity in the care of the churches, it would obviously be convenient if not indispensable, for one of their number to act as the moderator or president of their assemblies. Such a designation, however, would confer on the presiding elder no *official* superiority over his fellow-presbyters; but, coupled with age, and talents, and spiritual gifts, it might give him a control in their councils, and in the government of the church. This control, and this official rank, as the προεστώς, the presiding elder, which was first conceded to him by his fellow-presbyters only *as to a fellow-presbyter*, a *primus inter pares*, he began in time to claim as his official prerogative. He first began by moral means and the influence of accidental circumstances to be the bishop of the church, and afterwards claimed the office as his right. This assumption of authority gave rise to the gradual distinction between bishop and presbyter. It began early to disturb the relations of equality which at first subsisted between the ministers of the churches; and, in the course of the second and third centuries, resulted in the division of the clergy into two distinct orders,—bishops and presbyters.

This simple exposition of the origin of the Episcopal office has the sanction of the most approved authority, particularly

of the distinguished historian whose works we have so often cited,[16] to whom we may add Gieseler,[17] Guerike,[18] Gabler,[19] Mosheim,[20] Pertsch,[21] and many others.

2. The duties and responsibilties of the bishop in times of persecution, had their influence in exalting this officer, and separating him further, both from the presbyters and the people. Under such circumstances, the bishop of the metropolis became the counsellor and guardian of the churches. In his wisdom, his talents, and his influence were their confidence and trust. To him the needy and distressed also looked for consolation and relief.

3. The rage and vengeance of their persecutors fell oftenest upon him; and, while it excited for him the sympathy and veneration of the churches, prepared them more readily to acquiesce in his authority.[22]

4. As the church increased in number, the intercourse between each member individually and the bishop became less, and a corresponding separation between him and his people of necessity ensued.

[16] Apost. Kirch. 1. 39 seq. 3d ed. 50. 198 seq. 406. Allgem. Gesch. 1. 324 seq. 2d ed. "In the Acts, a plurality of presbyters always appears next in rank to the apostles, as representatives of the church at Jerusalem. If any one is disposed to maintain that each one of these presbyters presided over a smaller part of its special meetings, still it must be thereby established, that, notwithstanding these divided meetings, the church formed a whole, over which this deliberative college of presbyters presided, and therefore the form of government was still of a popular character."—*Neander Apost. Kirch.* 1. c. 2. 3d ed. "This plurality of ministers over the same church continued, even to the fourth century, to be the order of the churches."—*Planck, Gesell. Verfass.* 1, 551.

[17] Lehrbuch der Kirchengesch. 3. Aufl. 1. 118.

[18] Kirch. Geschichte, 1. S. 89—93, 2d ed.

[19] De Epis. primae eccl. eorumque origine.

[20] Hist. Eccl. 3. p. 108 seq. and Kirchenrecht, by Ernst, S. 52.

[21] Can. Recht. S. 42. Kirch. Hist., Saec. II. c. 5. § 8—15. Compare, especially, Ziegler's Versuch der Gesch. der Kirch. Verfass. S. 34—61.

[22] Spittler's Can. Recht. c. 1. § 5.

5. Many of the bishops were the successors of the apostles, or were bishops of apostolical churches, and this circumstance gave them additional influence.[23] The bishops of Rome,[24] of Carthage, of Jerusalem,[25] and others, derived importance from this consideration. The decisions and regulations of those churches, which had been planted by the hand, or reared up under the immediate supervision of the apostles, had, with other churches, not unfrequently a canonical authority equivalent to that of statute laws.[26]

6. The distinction between the *clergy* and *laity*, which began about this time, is worthy of particular notice. In the apostolical churches the office of teaching was not restricted to any particular class of persons. All Christians accounted themselves the priests of God; and between the church and their spiritual leaders very little distinction was known. This fact is so universally acknowledged, that it were needless to multiply authorities in proof of it. But it forcibly indicates the nature of the original constitution of the church.[27] The

[23] Comp. Tertull., De Praescript. Advers. Haeret. c. 20, 26, 36. Peter de Marca, de Concord. Sacerd. et Im. Lib. 5. c. 20. Lib. 7. c. 4. § 6 seq.

[24] Irenaeus Advers. Haer. Lib. 3. c. 2; 4. c. 26; 5. c. 20, 44.

[25] Firmil. ap. Cyp. Epist. 75.

[26] Mosheim, De Rebus Christ., Saec. II. § 21. In this section and the accompanying note is given a full and interesting illustration of the canonical authorities of such churches. Comp. also, Gieseler, Lehrbuch, S. 160—163. Note.

[27] Nonne et laici sacerdotes sumus? Differentiam inter ordinem et plebem constituit *ecclesiae auctoritas;* adeo ubi ecclesiastici ordinis non est consessus et offers, et tingis et sacerdos tibi es solus.—*De Exhortat. Castit.* c. 7. p. 522. Primum omnes docebant et omnes baptizabant; ut cresceret plebs et multiplicaretur omnibus inter initia concessus est et evangelizare et baptizare et scripturas explorare.—*Hilary, cited by Neander, Allgem. Gesch.* 1. S. 311. Comp. S. 324 seq., especially 335—337, 2d ed. Comp. Cyprian, Ep. 76. Suicer, Thesaurus, art. κλῆρος, Guerike, Kirch. Gesch. Vol 1. 93, 94, and J. H. Böhmer, De Differentia inter Ordinem Ecclesiast., etc.

distinction, accordingly, of pastors and people into two distinct orders, the *clergy* and the *laity*, distinctly marks the workings of that spirit which was fast obliterating the features of its early organization. Tertullian, †218, is the first to mention this distinction.[28] The people have now become an inferior order, the distinction between them and the higher order of the clergy widens fast, and the government of the church which has hitherto been vested in the people, passes rapidly into the hands of the bishop.

7. The clergy begin to claim authority from the analogy between their office and that of the Jewish priesthood. The officers of the church were originally organized according to the order of the Jewish synagogue. The name and office of rulers of the synagogue were transferred to the church. But the bishops now begin entirely to change their ground, and to claim analogy to the *Jewish priesthood* of the Old Testament. They are no longer incumbents in office at the pleasure of the people, and dependent upon them; but divinely constituted the priests of God; and divinely appointed by him to instruct and to rule over the church. "When once the idea of a Mosaic priesthood had been adopted in the Christian church, the clergy soon began to assume a superiority over the laity. The customary form of consecration was now supposed to have a certain mystic influence, and henceforth they stand in the position of persons appointed by God to be the medium of communication between him and the Christian world."[29]

8. From this it was but a slight modification to assert the divine right of Episcopacy, and the apostolical succession in the line of the bishops. Sentiments to this effect are of frequent occurrence in the writings of Cyprian, † 258. The

[28] De Monogamia, c. 12. p. 533.

[29] Gieseler, Cunningham's Trans. I. p. 156. Comp. Münscher, Handbuch der Christ. Dog. 3. p. 15. Conder's Protestant Nonconformity, Vol. I. p. 224. Comp. Planck, Gesell. Verfass. I. S. 163. Mosheim de Rebus. Saec., II. § 24.

bishops also assumed new titles, such as *sacerdotes*,[30] *priests*, *high-priests*, rulers of the church, etc.[31]

Finally, these arrogant asssumptions ended in the claim of guidance and wisdom from on high, by the communications of the Spirit of God. This was also the false and flattering dream of Cyprian,[32] and has been the favorite dogma of prelacy, from his time to the present day. These claims of the bishop to a divine commission and to illumination from above were more confidently put forth at a later period, after the hierarchy had become more fully established.

The following comprehensive summary offers a fit conclusion to the preceding remarks. "In process of time," says Mosheim, "the bishops found means to abridge the rights of the presbyters, the deacons, and the people. Such is the course of the world. They who are honored with the respect, and entrusted with the affairs of society, agreeably to the natural love which every man has for pre-eminence, seek for greater distinction, and the people favor the desire. Strife and contention are the necessary consequence of dividing offices of trust among many; and these struggles usually end in the advancement of him who is highest in office. Even Cyprian, who acknowledged the authority of the church over the bishop, and his duty in all things to act in concert with the clergy, had still the address so to exalt the power of the bishop as to overthrow the rights both of the clergy and the people. He affirmed that God made the bishops; that they were the vicegerents of Christ, and responsible to none but to God. He was the father of this dogma; and the bishops

[30] Comp. Cyp. Ep. 3. 4, 59. Spittler's Can. Recht. c. 1. § 11. Henke, Allgem. Gesch. der Christ. Kirch. 1. p. 120. Mosheim, De Rebus, Saec. III. § 24.

[31] Origen, Hom. 2. in Jer. Adv. Cels. Lib. 3. In Math. Tract. 31, 32.

[32] Placuit nobis sancto spiritu suggerente et Domino per visiones multas et manifestas admonente.—*Cyprian, Epist.* 54. p. 79. Conc. Car. A. D. 252.

continued to claim this prerogative until the ninth century, when the pope appropriated it exclusively to himself. The rights of the people and of the clergy were, in process of time wrested from them; they retaining only a negative vote. The bishops proceeded, themselves, to appoint the presbyters and deacons. The people were, at first, consulted by the bishops, but it was only an unmeaning form. The bishop carried the appointment of his favorite candidate; and the reference to the people was a mere act of courtesy. They were the agents of God. Opposition to their will was disobedience to him. The deacons became the creatures of the bishop, dependent upon him alone, and having little concern with the people. In a word, the deacons, even in the second century were, in many places, no more what they were at first. In ecclesiastical matters, the people were still consulted in some form, either by the bishop in person or by deputies; but they had no votes either individually or collectively. When any measure of importance was to be carried, the bishops first secured the interest of the presbyters in their favor; and when by various means, they had accomplished this, it only remained for the people to yield a respectful acquiescence. Some occasionally dissented, but the measure was generally carried, agreeably to the will of the bishop."[33]

The bishops rose in rank and power, as we have seen, not by any sudden and violent assumption of diocesan authority, but by the silent concession and approbation, at first, of the people. Their authority and influence was, at the outset, only that which is conceded to talent and piety in official stations, employed and exerted for the general good. "So that the growth of Episcopal power is not altogether attributable to ambitious designs on the part of those by whom it was first exercised. So far from this, the effect, as Dr. Campbell has remarked, 'is much more justly ascribed to their virtues.' How

[33] Kirchenrecht, by Ernst. S. 61—63.

paradoxical soever this may sound, it is difficult to account in any other way for the unopposed ascendency which was so soon obtained by men, whose ambition, had it betrayed itself when as yet unarmed by wealth or power, required but to be withstood, in order to be rendered harmless. That deference was, however, lavishly conceded to personal character, from a principle of veneration and unbounded confidence, which it would have been next to impossible openly to wrest from people roused to a jealous sense of their rights."[34] Their influence was analogous to that of a modern missionary over the churches which he has gathered about him in different stations; or it resembled that which the apostles and first preachers exercised over the churches which were planted by them. It is only to be regretted, that these bishops, in claiming to be the successors of the apostles, in office and in power, had not also enough of the spirit of their reputed ancestors, to employ the high trust which was committed unto them solely for the interest of the churches under their care; and then to resign it again for the same great end, instead of perverting the sacred privileges of their office into the means of gratifying their unholy ambition in the extension of the Episcopal prerogatives.

We have here an easy explanation of the difficulty which the advocates of prelacy affect to press with great force, in calling upon us to explain the origin of Episcopacy, on the supposition that it is not of divine appointment. Here, we are told, is an alleged usurpation, "without discussion, without excitement, without opposition, without known authors or abettors; a radical and permanent overthrow of an existing system of church government throughout the whole Roman empire, before the apostles were cold in their graves." Now, a hundred years is surely time enough to allow for one

[34] Conder's Nonconformity, 1. p. 227. Campbell's Lectures, pp. 94, 95. Mason's Works, Vol. III. p. 217 seq. Dr. Barrow's Treatise on Popish Supremacy.

to grow cold in his grave. But, all oratory apart, it is conceded that here is a change, an early change, and one made without controversy or opposition. And we are earnestly pressed for an explanation. We accept the challenge; and appeal to the considerations already suggested as an adequate explanation. Is it strange, under all the circumstances of the case, that the care of the churches should devolve upon a few? Is it a thing incredible, that men should love the exercise of power, and find means to secure it? Does history give no trace of any transition from a free and popular government to one more despotic? What was the end of the ancient republics of Greece? What succeeded to the popular government of consular Rome? How did the popular movement in the French Revolution terminate? All history, ecclesiastical and secular, shows how easily the sovereign power of the many may pass into the hands of a few. But in the instance before us, the churches, in confiding simplicity and sincerity, conceded to their spiritual rulers the rights in question by tacit consent. And after long-continued usage, the sanctions of synodical decrees, aided by the claim of apostolical succession, of divine right, and of the teachings of the Spirit of God, seem quite sufficient to guarantee to bishops the quiet possession of their Episcopal prerogatives.

"Power," says Dr. Hawkes, himself an eminent Episcopalian, "always passes slowly and silently, and without much notice, from the hands of the many to the few; and all history shows that ecclesiastical domination grows up by little and little. The overwhelming tyranny from which the Reformation freed the Protestant church, grew up by this *paulatim* process."[35]

Besides, Episcopacy arose in an age of comparative ignorance, when there were few historical records. In such a state of things an innovation might have been easily introduced which supported clerical influence and authority, and

[35] Cited in Smyth's Eccl. Republicanism, p. 166.

in the lapse of a few years it might be generally acknowledged as having been of immemorial existence in the church. The Episcopal church itself presents a pertinent case in illustration of this position. Very few of that communion know or believe that the prescribed mode of baptism in the church of England is *immersion*. This, however, is precisely and accurately the fact. The words of the formulary for the public baptism of infants in their book of common prayer are as follows: "then, naming it after them (if they shall certify that the child may well endure it) he (the priest) shall dip it in the water discreetly and warily, saying, etc. But if they certify that the child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it." In this, under circumstances the most improbable, an innovation has been made of which the mass of the people are totally ignorant. The mode of baptism has been entirely changed without their knowledge or belief, while every churchman holds in his hand the prayer-book which describes the exact manner in which the ordinance shall be administered. Shall we wonder then at the gradual change in the government of the church in that early age, when every thing favored its introduction, and in the absence of any written constitution, or remaining records of the primitive church?

"Different from their modern followers must have been those ancient Presbyterians, not to have struck a single blow!" True, indeed, but not at all different from their modern American successors, were those primitive Episcopalians, in yielding tamely to the continual encroachments of Episcopal power. Nay, we contend that the progress of Episcopacy in this country is itself a phenomenon more extraordinary, more unaccountable, than the rise and progress of Episcopacy in the ancient church.

It is well known that the introduction of Episcopacy into this country gave rise to a long and bitter controversy. The objection, made from within the Episcopal churches as well as from without, was, that its form of government is anti-re-

publican, and opposed to the spirit of our free institutions. The House of Burgesses, in Virginia, composed chiefly of Episcopalians, declared their abhorrence of bishops, unless at the distance of three thousand miles, and denounced "the plan of introducing them, in the most unexceptionable form, on this side of the Atlantic, as a pernicious project."

When, at last, Episcopacy was introduced, it was only by a compromise,—the Episcopalian churches consenting to submit to diocesan Episcopacy, only in a form greatly modified, and divested of its most obnoxious features. To the exclusion of the laity from a free and full participation in the affairs of the government they would not for a moment submit. Such, according to Bishop White, was the prejudice of Episcopalians, "against the name, and much more against the office of a bishop, that, but for the introduction of the laity into the government of the church, no general organization would probably have been formed." Accordingly, the people were allowed freely to choose their own pastors, and to have a full representation in all their courts. This American Episcopacy was so modified, and the prelatical powers of the bishop so restricted by the checks and balances of republican principles, that the English prelates, on the other hand, were reluctant to confer the Episcopate upon Bishop White, alleging that he "entertained a design to set up Episcopacy on the ground of *presbyterial and lay authority*."

Such was American Eiscopacy, at first,—qualified as much as possible, by the infusion of popular principles, to restrain the arbitrary powers of the bishop. But what now has this same Episcopacy become? What now the powers of the bishop, compared with what they then were? He possesses power almost as arbitrary as that of an Eastern despot; and assumes to rule by an authority independent of the will of his subjects. The bishops are permanent and irresponsible monarchs, restrained by no judicial tribunal. The house of bishops admit no order of the inferior clergy to their

general convention. They ordain, depose, and restore to the ministry, at pleasure, whom they will; "so that a Puseyite bishop may fill the church with impenitent and unconverted men." He can prevent any congregation from settling the minister of their choice, or displace one at his will, and may, "*upon probable cause*," forbid any clergyman from another diocese to officiate in his own. Such is the fearful nature of those powers which are now entrusted to this spiritual despot in our free republic.[36]

And yet as if all this ominous accumulation of Episcopal prerogatives were not enough, the claims of the bishops are still pressed higher and higher. The house of bishops, with all its powers, has been superinduced upon the general convention, since its establishment in America. Now these privileged hierarchs can only be tried *by themselves; i. e.*, if a president be guilty of any crime or misdemeanor whatever, he must be impeached and tried by a jury *of presidents alone;* a governor, by a jury of governors. In one convention, the bishop lately claimed and exercised the prerogative of adjusting the roll of the members, denying to them the right of all deliberative assemblies,—that of deciding upon the qualifications of their own members; and the same convention, "by a vote of nearly three to one," meekly acquiesced in this claim of their prelate.[37] Another convention provides that its proceedings "*shall not be open to the public.*" It gives to the bishop an absolute veto upon all their acts; and, to crown the whole, makes him "the judge in all ecclesiastical trials." Well may we say with Dr. Hawkes, "NOTHING BUT THIS WAS WANTING TO MAKE HIM ABSOLUTE. We will speak, and speak out, when we see all power, legislative, judicial, and executive,

[36] These astounding facts and principles, with the original authorities for them, are disclosed more at length in the writings of Dr. Smyth, to whom we are chiefly indebted for the above abstract of them. Compare, especially, Apost. Succession, pp. 507—509, and Ecclesiastical Republicanism, pp. 153—172.

[37] Letters to the Laity by a Protestant Episcopalian, p. 17.

centred in one man in such ample plenitude, that he may even dictate to the fashion of a surplice, or the shape of a gown."[38]

This admirable specimen of religious legislation, we are told, was actually prepared by the bishop himself, and ratified in a state more radically democratic than any other in the Union! "Let any man read that constitution, and then say, whether, if the individual who has been thus extravagantly exalted, had dared to brave the public sentiment of the country in which he lives, so far as to carry out into practice the authority which has been thus lavishly bestowed upon him, we should not have to look to the mountains of Vermont for the mightiest spiritual autocrat at present inhabiting the globe, —with, perhaps, one exception, the man who wears the tiara, and builds his habitation on the seven hills."[39]

Consider now this enormous extension of the Episcopal power in this enlightened age, in this free republic,—this monstrous spiritual despotism imposed upon a people, jealous above all men of their rights, and prompt to repel every invasion of them;—contemplate such a people, under such circumstances, with scarcely a feeble note of remonstrance, bowing themselves down to this hierarchal supremacy, and shall we wonder at the early rise of a mild and comparatively unformed Episcopacy? Shall we marvel at the gradual extension of its influence over feeble churches, dependent for their support and protection? Why should this be thought a thing incredible, in view of what is transpiring in the midst of us?

[38] New York Review, Oct. 1835, cited in Letters to the Laity.

[39] Letters to the Laity, p. 27.—The late transactions in the diocese of New York are fresh in the public mind, and familiar to all;—the high-handed despotism of the prelate, and the profound self-abasement with which a large portion of his clergy could consent to kneel down in the dust at the feet of their sovereign pontiff and crave his benediction.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DIOCESAN GOVERNMENT.

This term denotes the ecclesiastical organization which succeeded a fuller development of the Episcopal system, and further concentration of power in the hands of the bishop. It was gradually matured, and was settled upon the churches in the several provinces, at different times, extending through an indefinite period. The establishment of this form of government cannot with precision be assigned to a specific epoch. Suffice it to say, that the third century may be regarded as the period in which the diocesan government was chiefly consolidated and established. It was the result of a variety of causes, which deserve a careful consideration, and was productive of consequences of great moment to the interests of religion. The course of our inquiries in relation to the establishment of Diocesan Episcopacy will lead us to consider,

I. The means of its development.
II. Its results.

I. Means of its development.

1. The formal organization of the diocesan government was chiefly effected by means of provincial synods and councils.

The consideration of these councils belongs to another work.[1] But whatever may have been their origin, such ecclesiastical assemblies were regularly held in Asia Minor, in

[1] Christian Antiquities, chap. 17. § 9. pp. 356—367.

the third century, and were frequently convened in other provinces, for the transaction of business relating to the interests of the church.[2] They were summoned by the presiding bishop of the province. The bishops of the province were expected to attend, and if any were present from other provinces, they were courteously recognized as members of the same. The presbyters and deacons, also, had at this time, in the opinion of many, a seat and a voice in these councils, though at a later period they were excluded. The council, on the one hand, was the highest judicature of the church, where all that related to its interests in the province was discussed; on the other, it served as a privy-council to the bishop. Here, especially, were all cases brought relating to the bishops. Cases of this kind could only be brought before the council in a full assembly of the bishops, and even then not at pleasure, but only with their consent. Such an assembly, it must readily be seen, afforded a convenient method of deciding any subject of common interest to the churches; though the bishops themselves probably were not aware of the important consequences which might result from assuming thus to give laws to the church. The decisions of the synod, also, at first, assumed the form of law, rather by common consent, than as imperative enactments. They were the decisions of a public deliberative and representative assembly, in which the voice of the majority becomes the law of the whole; and under the sanction of such authority, were received as the rule of the church. But the bishops, having once acquired the power of giving laws to the church, soon changed the ground of their authority; and, instead of legislating for those churches in their name, and as their *representatives*, they assumed the right of giving laws to the church by virtue of their *Episcopal office;* and for this assumption,

[2] Necessario, says Firmilian, A. D. 257, apud nos fit, ut per singulos annos seniores et praepositi in unum conveniamus, ad disponenda ea quae curae nostrae commissa sunt.—*Cyp. Ep.* 75. p. 143.

they claimed, as has been already mentioned, the sanction of divine authority, *jure divino*, as the ministers of God, and under the guidance of his Spirit.[3]

The above representation is only an epitome of the sentiments of Planck, in his work on the Constitution of the Church, which has been so frequently cited.[4] They accord entirely with the representations of Mosheim, and many others who might be named.[5] Mosheim remarks, that these councils "were productive of so great an alteration in the general state of the church, as nearly to effect the entire subversion of its ancient constitution. For, in the first place, the primitive rights of the people, in consequence of this new arrangement of things, experienced a considerable diminution, inasmuch as thenceforward none but affairs of comparatively trifling importance were ever made the subject of popular deliberation and adjustment;—the councils of the associated churches assuming to themselves the right of discussing and regulating everything of moment or importance; as well as of determining all questions to which any sort of weight was attached.—In the next place, the dignity and authority of the bishops were very much augmented and enlarged. In the infancy, indeed, of the councils, the bishops did not scruple to acknowledge that they appeared there merely as the ministers or legates of their respective churches; and that they were in fact nothing more than representatives acting under instructions. But it was not long before this humble language, began by little and little, to be exchanged for a loftier

[3] *Placet! Visum est!* is the style not unfrequently, in which the summary decisions of their councils are given; or if the decision relates to an article of faith, *credit catholica ecclesia!* Athanasius, De Synodo. Arimin. et Seluciae, Ferdin. De Mendoza, De Confirmatione Conc., Ill. Lib. 2. c. 2, cited by Spittler.

[4] Gesellschafts-Verfass. 1. S. 90—100.

[5] Compare also Henke and Vater, Allgemein. Kirchen Gesch. I. S. 120 seq. Eichhorn, Can. Recht. I. S. 20. Riddle's Chron. pp. 32, 33.

tone; and they, at length, took it upon them to assert that they were the legitimate successors of the apostles themselves and might, consequently, by their own proper authority, dictate to the Christian flock. To what extent the inconveniences and evils arising out of these preposterous pretensions reached in after times, is too well known to require any particular notice in this place."[6] Some of these remarks, however, are especially applicable, as the intelligent reader will perceive, to the state of things which existed somewhat later, under the metropolitan government.

2. The doctrine of the *unity* of the church had an influence in consolidating the churches under an Episcopal government.

This notion was early developed. It first occurs in the epistle of the church of Smyrna, concerning the martyrdom of Polycarp.[7] It was more distinctly advanced by Irenaeus and Tertullian, in the second century; and, in the third, became the favorite dogma of Cyprian,[8] and, after him, of many others.[9] The effect was to create greater oneness of feeling and concert of action among the churches as members of one and the same body. It brought the churches into more frequent correspondence; and, in many ways, contributed to the establishment of uniform laws and regulations under an Episcopal hierarchy.[10] This idea of a holy catholic church, one and indivisible, extending through all lands, and binding together in one communion the faithful of every kindred and people, was a conception totally unlike the apostoli-

[6] De Rebus Christ., Saec. II. § 23; Comp. Saec. II. § 22; Saec. III. § 24. Also, Kirch. Recht. S. 65, 66.

[7] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 4. c. 15. § 1.

[8] Pro corpore totius ecclesiae cujus per varias quasque provincias membra digesta sunt.—*Ep.* 30. p. 41.

[9] Planck, Gesell. Verfass. I. S. 100 seq. Rothe, Anf. Christ. Kirch. I. S. 576—589.

[10] Neander, Allgem. Gesch. I. S. 355, 371, 2d ed. D'Aubigné's Hist. of the Reformation. N. Y. 1843. Vol. I. pp. 20—22.

cal idea—of union in love and fellowship in spirit. Whatever may have been the motive with which it was at first promulgated, it had its influence in blending the churches together under a uniform diocesan organization, and became the occasion of no small share of the bigotry, intolerance and persecution which have so often dishonored the Christian church.

3. The correspondence and intercourse between the bishops of different provinces had much influence in establishing their diocesan authority.

Not only were the results of their councils officially communicated to foreign bishops and churches, but the bishops themselves of different dioceses were in mutual correspondence. Their own appointment to office, and their various official acts, were duly communicated. By mutual understanding they acted unitedly and in concert, and aided each other in the promotion of their common ends. Their acts of ecclesiastical censure were extensively published; so that one under the Episcopal ban was followed by his sentence of excommunication wherever he went. He must also return to his own bishop to be restored again to the fellowship of the church. Without credentials also duly certified by his diocesan no stranger was entitled to the confidence of any body of believers. The effect of these regulations was to sustain and enforce the authority of the bishops in their dioceses.[11]

4. The *Disciplina Arcani*, the sacred mysteries of the church, while they shed an air of awful sanctity over its solemnities were well suited to inspire the people with a profound veneration for the bishop, who was the high-priest of these rites and the chief agent in administering them.

The discussion of this subject would be altogether foreign to our present object, but it needs no peculiar sagacity, to perceive that the system addressed itself to principles of our

[11] Siegel, Handbuch. 1. art. Briefwechsel, Rheinwald's Arch. § 4. p. 99.

nature, which are deep and strong, and which acted upon by the ministrations of the bishop, gave him prodigious power over the minds of men. This secret system, wholly unknown in the earlier history of the church, was in a measure matured in the period now under consideration.[12]

5. The catechetical instructions and discipline preparatory to admission into the church, had a powerful influence in giving authority to the doings of the church, and preparing the mind for a passive submission to her jurisdiction.

Throughout the first century Christian converts were received by baptism into the church simply on the ground of their faith in Christ. In the second century some further instruction began to be required; and, in the course of the third and fourth, a long preliminary course of training was necessary, before the candidates found admission to the church. They were divided into various classes; and, ascending by slow gradations through these, with manifold solemnities, they finally approached the sacred shrine of the church. The details of the system belong to another subject. But every reader, who has the least acquaintance with the antiquities of the church, must readily perceive, that in this long course of discipline, extending often through a series of years, the catechumen might be duly trained to revere the authority of the church, and to submit with all deference to the agents by whom it was administered. Without attributing it to any sinister motive, its natural effect would be to inspire a profound respect, both for the ordinances of the church, and for those who administered them.[13] "These new regulations," Planck remarks, "were the surest and strongest means man could have devised to give greater importance to the church in the eyes of the new members; and to inspire them with a sense of the importance of the

[12] Comp. the author's Christian Antiquities, c 1. § 4. pp. 35, 36.

[13] Comp. the author's Christian Antiquities, c. 2. § 5. pp. 49—57.

privilege bestowed in receiving them into its communion, which again would revert to the interests of the church."[14]

6. To the same effect, also, was all that system of penance, which was matured in connection with the foregoing regulations.

This was wholly unknown in the early period of the church. It was developed in connection with the catechetical discipline which has already been mentioned, and was indeed a part of the same system.[15] It was administered by the bishop, who alone had authority to inflict or to remove these penances.[16] It was a scourge in his hand which he could, at any time, apply to those who might become the objects of his displeasure.

The transgressor who fell under ecclesiastical censure was doomed to give token of penitence, by a long train of the most humiliating acts, better suited by far to illustrate the tre-

[14] Gesell. Verfass. 1. S. 132.

[15] Planck, Gesell. Verfass. 1. S. 132—141.

[16] The councils of Nice, A. D. 325, c. 5, and of Antioch, A. D. 341, c. 20, make some provision against the flagrant injustice which one might suffer in this way from the bishop. But the council of Elliberis, A. D. 305, and of Sardica, A. D. 347, give to the bishop unlimited authority in this matter. Osius, episcopus dixit. Hoc quoque omnibus placeat, ut sive diaconus, sive presbyter, sive quis clericorum ab episcopo suo communione fuerit privatus, et ad alterum perrexerit episcopum, et scierit ille ad quem confugit, eum ab episcopo suo fuisse abjectum, non oportet ut ei communionem indulgeat. Quod si fecerit, sciat se convocatis episcopis causas esse dicturum. Universi dixerunt: Hoc statutum et pacem servabit, et concordiam custodiet, c. 13 (16). This was one of the most celebrated councils of the age. It was composed of one hundred and sixty-six bishops convened both from the Eastern and Western churches, at the head of whom was the venerable Hosius, who it would seem proposed it as an expedient to preserve peace and harmony among the bishops.—*Εἴ τις κληρικὸς ἢ λαικὸς ἀφωρισμένος ἤτοι ἄδεκτος, ἀπελθὼν ἐν ἑτέρᾳ πόλει, δεχθῇ ἄνευ γραμμάτων συστατικῶν, ἀφοριζέσθω καὶ ὁ δεξάμενος καὶ ὁ δεχθείς· εἰ δὲ ἀφωρισμένος εἴη, ἐπιτεινέσθω αὐτῷ ὁ ἀφορισμὸς, ὡς ψευσαμένῳ καὶ ἀπατήσαντι τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ.—Can. Apost.* 12 (13). p. 2.

mendous power of the bishop than to lead the offender to true repentance. However that may be, a despotic government is strong and stable in proportion to the force of those sanctions, by which it secures obedience to its authority. The rigors of this penance, accordingly, invested the diocesan with authority adequate to the administration of his government.

If any minister received to his communion one who had not fulfilled the appointed penance, he was himself liable to the sentence of excommunication.

II. Results of the diocesan organization.

Under this head we shall confine our attention chiefly to its influence in establishing an aristocracy in the church, and in preparing the way for a full development of the hierarchy, under a metropolitan organization, to which the diocesan soon gave place.

1. It established the pre-eminence of the bishop in the city over the neighboring churches.

The distinction which conventional usage had first given him now became an established right. It was his official prerogative to nominate the presbyters to these churches. These presbyters continued still dependent upon him; and the churches themselves acknowledged a similar relation to the parent church. Thus his became a *cathedral church*, *ubi cathedra episcopi*, from which the others had proceeded, and to which they acknowledged a filial relation.

2. It was a virtual disfranchisement of the laity.

They had, indeed, a voice in the elections of the bishop; and some little participation still in the management of the concerns of the church. But the sovereignty of the people was effectually lost. Everything was done agreeably to the will of the bishops, who united in themselves the right to make and execute laws for the government of the church. This union of the executive and legislative power in the same per-

sons was subversive of all true religious liberty, as it ever has been of all political freedom. It removed the checks and guards of a popular government against the exercise of arbitrary power. It invested the bishops with prerogatives, which can never be entrusted, with safety, to any man or body of men. The subsequent history of the church abundantly illustrates the disastrous consequences of this surrender of the popular rights into the hands of the clergy. "To revive Christ's church is to expel the Antichrist of the priesthood, which, as it was foretold of him, *as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God*, and to restore its disfranchised members, the laity, to the discharge of their proper duties in it, and to the consciousness of their paramount importance."[17]

3. The government was oppressive to the laity, as it entrusted to the bishop exclusively the right of ecclesiastical censure.

This right, again, may have been exercised, at first, with moderation, and often with single regard to the purity of the church and the honor of religion. But it gave the bishops a dangerous control over the private members of the church. Its tendency was to inspire them with the fear of man; to make them more careful to escape the censure of the diocesan, than anxious to avoid sinning against God. How strictly this prerogative of the bishop was guarded we have already seen. The passport of the bishop was indispensable to commend a stranger to the fellowship of his Christian brethren. The absence of this was presumptive evidence against him. Under censure, he had no redress, however unjustly it might have been inflicted; and could only be restored at the pleasure of his own diocesan. Such was the subjugation to which this system of government reduced the laity;—a subjugation, to which the laity of the Episcopal church in America seem also to be rapidly sinking, under

[17] Christian Life, by Arnold, p. 52.

the continual encroachments of the bishops upon their rights. "To confine the decisions of all cases which must arise in every well-ordered society, to the clergymen, or to the clergy alone, and thus to consolidate in their hands the entire government of the body, is contrary to the very first law of all society, which provides that no man shall be judge in his own cause. On this principle, there is no society, no freedom, no protection from oppressive and despotic rule, no bulwark against that resistless tide, with which power, when lodged in the hands of a few weak and imperfect men, encroaches upon the territory, and the just rights, of all who are opposed to it. Nor can that ecclesiastical system be possibly republican, or consonant to the genius of our free commonwealths which subjugates the laity to the clergy, and the inferior clergy, as they are ignobly called, to the higher, and which attaches a supremacy of power to an aristocratic class."[18]

4. It destroyed the independence of the clergy under the diocesan.

They who, by their proximity to the bishop, were brought into familiar intercourse with him, or were not so immediately dependent upon him, still maintained a certain degree of independence. But the principle of subordination, and of subjection to the authority of the diocesan, was inherent in the system, and clearly manifested. His authority was, indeed, far less oppressive at first than it afterwards became. There was a strong republican spirit, that could not be rooted out, or crushed at once. The churches had still some voice in the management of their affairs. They had a right to appoint, and to remove their clergy at pleasure,—a right, which even Cyprian, in the middle of the third century, fully acknowledges. He admits, that the "people, in obedience to the commands of the Lord, and in the fear of God, ought to separate themselves from a minister of an immoral character; nor should they mingle in the services of a sacrilegious priest,

[18] Smyth's Eccl. Republicanism, pp. 81, 82.

for they especially have power to choose the worthy, and to refuse the unworthy."[19] This right of the church afforded the clergy, also, the means of resisting the encroachments of the bishops, by making interest with the people. It was, accordingly, the policy of the bishops at this time, to exercise their authority with moderation.

The presbyters also were still the privy-counsellors of the bishop, in ecclesiastical matters, and preached and baptized in common with him, with this distinction, that in the discharge of these duties, the bishop took precedence of the other clergy. Still the authority of the bishop was such as practically to destroy the independence of the clergy; and, in theory, was imperative over them.

But the bishops soon found means to effect the complete subjection of the clergy to their control. They allowed them in no instance, to travel into a neighboring province without a passport from the bishop. Much less could a presbyter or deacon transfer himself from one church to another, without the bishop's consent. If any one should presume so to do, or if another should receive him who came without the bishop's consent, the consequence was expulsion from office.[20]

[19] Propter quod plebs, obsequens praeceptis dominicis et Deum metuens, a peccatore praeposito separare debet, nec se ad sacrilegi sacerdotis sacrificia miscere quoniam ipsa maximè habeat potestatem vel eligendi dignos sacerdotes, vel indignos recusandi.—*Ep.* 68. p. 118.

[20] *Εἴ τις πρεσβύτερος ἢ διάκονος ἢ ὅλως τοῦ καταλόγου τῶν κληρικῶν ἀπολείψας τὴν ἑαυτοῦ παροικίαν εἰς ἑτέραν ἀπέλθῃ, καὶ παντελῶς μεταστὰς διατρίβῃ ἐν ἄλλῃ παροικίᾳ παρὰ γνώμην τοῦ ἰδίου ἐπισκόπου· τοῦτον κελεύομεν μηκέτι λειτουργεῖν, μάλιστα εἰ προσκαλουμένου αὐτὸν τοῦ ἐπισκόπου αὐτοῦ ἐπανελθεῖν οὐχ ὑπήκουσεν ἐπιμένων τῇ ἀταξίᾳ· ὡς λαϊκὸς μέντοι ἐκεῖσε κοινωνείτω.*—*Apost. Can.*, 14 (15), *Bruns*, p. 3. Comp. also, Conc. Antioch, c. 3. Laodic. c. 42. Arelat. c. 21. Chalced. c. 20. Nice, c. 16. Carthag. 1. c. 5. Sardic. 16, 18, etc., etc. Siegel, 11. S. 462.

5 It entrusted the bishop with a dangerous prerogative, by giving him the control of the revenues of the church.

This was a prerogative alike dangerous and unjust in its character, and injurious in its practical results. It was an established principle in the polity of the church, at this time, that the bishop, who had the supremacy in spiritual things, ought the more to have the same in things temporal.[21] Accordingly, the goods and property of the church, its revenues, and receipts of every kind, were submitted to the disposal of the bishop. It was, indeed, expected that they would be used with moderation, and equitably distributed, according to a certain rule. The other clergy were entitled to act in concert with the bishop in the distribution; but there was still abundant opportunity for the exercise of arbitrary power. The bishop was virtually, amenable to no one, for he could only be impeached by his clergy, who received their monthly rations from him, *divisionem mensurnam*, and who accordingly, would be slow to endanger their living by exposing themselves

[21] *Πάντων τῶν ἐκκλησιαστικῶν πραγμάτων ὁ ἐπίσκοπος ἐχέτω τὴν φροντίδα καὶ διοικείτω αὐτά, ὡς θεοῦ ἐφορῶντος· μὴ ἐξεῖναι δὲ αὐτῷ σφετερίζεσθαί τι ἐξ αὐτῶν ἢ συγγενέσιν ἰδίοις τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ χαρίζεσθαι· εἰ δὲ πένητες εἶεν, ἐπιχορηγείτω ὡς πένησιν, ἀλλὰ μὴ προφάσει τούτου τὰ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἀπεμπολείτω. Προστάττομεν ἐπίσκοπον ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν τῶν τῆς ἐκκλησίας πραγμάτων· εἰ γὰρ τὰς τιμίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων ψυχὰς αὐτῷ πιστευτέον, πολλῷ ἂν μᾶλλον δέοι ἐπὶ τῶν χρημάτων ἐντέλλεσθαι, ὥστε κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ ἐξουσίαν πάντα διοικεῖσθαι, καὶ τοῖς δεομένοις διὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ διακόνων ἐπιχορηγεῖσθαι μετὰ φόβου τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πάσης εὐλαβείας· μεταλαμβάνειν δὲ καὶ αὐτὸν τῶν δεόντων (εἴγε δέοιτο) εἰς τὰς ἀναγκαίας αὐτῷ χρείας καὶ τῶν ἐπιξενουμένων ἀδελφῶν, ὡς κατὰ μηδένα τρόπον αὐτοὺς ὑστερεῖσθαι· ὁ γὰρ νόμος τοῦ θεοῦ διετάξατο, τοὺς τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ ὑπηρετοῦντας ἐκ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου τρέφεσθαι· ἐπείπερ οὐδὲ στρατιῶταί ποτε ἰδίοις ὀψωνίοις ὅπλα κατὰ πολεμίων ἐπιφέρονται.—Apost. Can.* 37 (39), 40 (41), *Bruns*, pp. 6, 7.

to his displeasure. Under these circumstances, they were reduced to a humiliating subordination, which exposed them to the oppressive exactions of arbitrary power, while it gave security to the bishop in the exercise of it. How closely some of our modern bishops have copied after this odious canon, we have seen at the close of the preceding chapter.

The council of Antioch, A. D. 341, gave the bishops entire control over all the property of the church; and the synod of Gangra, A. D. 362—370, pronounced their solemn anathema upon any one who should either give or receive any of the goods of the church without authority from the bishop.[22] The oppressive results of this system are clearly and concisely stated by Siegel,[23] and more at length by Planck.[24] Without the guidance of another, however, they must be obvious to any one. The subsequent history of the church is the best expositor of this policy; as unjust, as it was impolitic and injurious. "Responsibility to the people, is, therefore, a fundamental principle of republicanism; a responsibility which gives the most insignificant contributor of his money towards any object, a right to examine into the manner in which it is disbursed."[25]

[22] *Εἴ τις καρποφορίας ἐκκλησιαστικὰς ἐθέλοι λαμβάνειν ἢ διδόναι ἔξω τῆς ἐκκλησίας παρὰ γνώμην τοῦ ἐπισκόπου ἢ τοῦ ἐγκεχειρισμένου τὰ τοιαῦτα, καὶ μὴ μετὰ γνώμης αὐτοῦ ἐθέλοι πράττειν, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω. Εἴ τις διδοῖ ἢ λαμβάνοι καρποφορίαν παρεκτὸς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου ἢ τοῦ ἐπιτεταγμένου εἰς οἰκονομίαν εὐποιΐας, καὶ ὁ διδοὺς καὶ ὁ λαμβάνων ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.—Conc. Gang.* 7, 8, *Bruns*, p. 103. Comp. Conc. Aurel. I. c. 14, 15.

[23] Handbuch, II. S. 463. [24] Gesell. Verfass. I. S. 381—402.

[25] "The great rule of all free institutions,—*that the people alone shall lay taxes*,—a vital principle of all constitutional government,—an essential guaranty of all safe public administration,—has become involved, is at stake; that solemn canon of republican creeds,—that high fundamental law,—no, sir, not a law, the mere part of a code, or a constitution; it is itself a constitution; for, give but that, and a real constitution must follow; take it away, and there is an end of

6. It gave the bishop unjust power over the clergy, by allowing him to inflict upon them ecclesiastical censure.

These censures were, indeed, administered at first with caution, and not without the concurrence of a part, at least, of the clergy and of the church. Such moderation was requisite, to prevent a combination of the clergy and the people against the bishop; and the more so, before the introduction of that insidious regulation which gave the bishop, who inflicted the penalty, the sole right of removing it at pleasure. This crafty policy, introduced partly by direct coalition on the part of the bishops, and partly by silent consent on the part of the people, had more influence than any other in completing the subjugation of the clergy, and settling upon the churches the government of an oppressive ecclesiastical aristocracy. The right of appeal to the civil authority was also strictly denied.[26]

7. It was the occasion, in a great degree, of breaking down the good order and discipline of the church, which had hitherto prevailed.

This was the direct result of those collisions between the bishops and presbyters, to which we have already alluded. "The bishops claimed to have the highest authority, and acted accordingly in the government of the church. The presbyters refused to acknowledge this claim, and strove to make themselves independent of the bishops. This strife between the Presbyterian and Episcopal systems is of the utmost importance in developing the moral and religious state of the church in the third century. Many presbyters made use of their influence to disturb the order and discipline of the church. This strife was, in every way, injurious to its order and discipline."[27]

all practical freedom."—Mr. Archer's Speech in Congress, Aug. 1, 1842. See Locke on Government, c. 7. § 94. Works, Vol. II. p. 254.—*Smyth's Eccl. Republicanism*, p. 27.

[26] Conc. Antioch, Can. 11.

[27] Neander, Allgem. Kirch. Gesch. 1. S. 329, 330, 2d ed.

CHAPTER IX.

THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT.

This was a more comprehensive organization, to which the diocesan soon gave place. It is not easy to determine with precision the date of its establishment. It was not the production of a day, but the result of a gradual modification of the diocesan government, by a further concentration of Episcopal power, and the extension of its influence over a wider range of territory. These modifications were not altogether the same in every country, nor were they simultaneously effected. The metropolitan government was developed in the Eastern church as early as the first half of the fourth century. The council of Nice, A. D. 325, c. 4, ordered, that the "bishops should in the provinces be subject to the metropolitan;" and again, c. 6, "that no one should be appointed bishop without the consent of the metropolitan." The council of Antioch, A. D. 341, c. 9, defined and established fully the rights of the metropolitan.

The establishment of a hierarchy in the West followed at a period somewhat later. The Christian religion was not introduced so early into the West, as into the East. It was also still more blended with paganism, especially in the provinces and remote districts; and the government of the churches was more unsettled than in those of the East. Still, the metropolitan government was finally introduced into the several districts of the Western church.

The capital of the province was not, of necessity, the seat of the metropolitan see, nor did the limits of metropolitan jurisdiction uniformly coincide with those of a province. In Africa peculiar respect was paid to seniority in office. The bishop of Carthage, however, was usually regarded as the primate of the country. The African church was also distinguished for its peculiar attachment to the free and popular constitution of the primitive church; and, to some extent, successfully resisted the encroachments of metropolitan usurpation. It would be interesting to pursue this branch of the subject, and inquire into the causes which led to the selection of those cities which became the seats, respectively, of the several metropolitan sees, but we must content ourselves with simply saying, that this distinction was conferred upon Jerusalem, Antioch, Caesarea, Alexandria, Ephesus, Corinth, Rome, Carthage, Lyons, and others. Thus in time the metropolitan government, in place of the diocesan, was settled upon the whole Christian church.

I. Means of its establishment.

The supremacy which the bishops had already acquired, together with the rapid extension of Christianity, soon introduced this organization as a new form of the hierarchy. After becoming the state religion under Constantine, Christianity spread with great rapidity. Small churches became large Christian communities, of sufficient importance to claim the privilege of having bishops of their own, in the place of presbyters. These bishops, however, like the presbyters who preceded them, still sustained certain relations to the bishop of the metropolis; and, in many ways, conceded to him the pre-eminence. It was his prerogative to summon the meetings of the synod, to make the introductory address, to preside over their deliberations, and to publish the results of their council. The publication of these results made him known in all the churches. All official returns from other

churches and councils were also made to him,—all which contributed to establish his superiority, and to give him a controlling influence over the other bishops of the province. These provincial bishops soon became emulous of receiving consecration at the hands of the metropolitan; and, accordingly, he began as opportunity presented, to assume to himself the exclusive right of ordaining. Thus the process of centralization went steadily on, widening the circle of its influence, and drawing those at a greater distance within the power of the primate.

This authority was, as yet, wholly conventional, so that his official superiority was virtually conceded to him, and established, before the intention was entertained of confirming it by statute-law. The name of Metropolitan had not yet been conferred upon him, but in the councils of this period he is styled *primate, primate of the apostolical see*, etc.[1] But about the beginning of the fourth century, the prerogatives of the metropolitan began to be the subject of statute-regulations. As in civil matters, the smaller towns and villages were dependent upon the larger, and all mutually dependent upon the capital of the province, so in the church, the country was divided into ecclesiastical districts, corresponding, *even in name*, with those of the state. Thus the church received from the Roman state, without change of signification, the terms, metropolis, diocese, etc.; so that the names of the different orders of the clergy denoted not their official duties, so much as their local relations and relative rank. Hence, the names of *rural* and *city* bishops,—*provincial, diocesan*, and *metropolitan*.[2]

We have now reached that period in the history of the church, in which its government appears in almost total

[1] Com. Ziegler's Versuch. S. 69—71.

[2] The development of the metropolitan system is briefly stated by Siegel, Handbuch, 11. S. 264 seq.; and more at length, by Planck, Gesell. Verfass. I. S. 572—598, and by Ziegler, S. 61—164.

contrast with that of its apostolical and primitive organization. The supreme authority is no longer vested in the church collectively, under a popular administration, but in an ecclesiastical aristocracy; and the government of the church is thus entrusted to a clerical hierarchy, who both make and administer the laws, without the intervention of the people. This, then, is a proper point at which to pause, and contemplate the practical results of the system of ecclesiastical polity which has taken the place of that which the church originally received at the hands of the apostles.

II. Results of the system.

These may be contemplated in their relations to the laity, to the clergy, and to the general interests of religion.

1. In regard to the laity.

(*a*) It destroyed the sovereignty of the church as a collective body.

The sovereign authority had formerly been vested, not in the apostles, not in the clergy, but in the whole body of the church. Its members, collectively, enjoyed the inherent right of all popular assemblies,—that of enacting their own laws and regulations, and of controlling the execution of them by electing their own officers, for the administration of their government. Under the Episcopal government, this cardinal right, the only basis of all rational liberty, civil or religious, was taken away from them. They had no part in framing the rules by which they were governed. Though they still retained some control over the election of their spiritual rulers, the system itself was already a virtual disfranchisement of the people; and finally resulted in the total separation of the people from all part even in the elections to ecclesiastical offices. The law-making power was now entirely in the hands of the bishops, who gave laws to the people, under the pretended sanction of divine authority, and executed them at their own pleasure. The result is given by Planck, in the

following terms: "From the spirit of most of the ordinances which these new lawgivers made for the laity, this much, at least, is apparent in the execution of them, that they were directly designed or adapted to bring the people yet more under the yoke of the clergy, or to give them opportunity more frequently and firmly to exercise their power."[3]

(*b*) It exposed the laity to unjust exactions, by uniting the *legislative* and *executive* branches of government.

The union of these has ever been the grand expedient of despotic usurpation; and it is as true in church as in state, that when these two great departments of government are united in one and the same man, or body of men, the subjugation of the people is well nigh completed. They may have wise and good magistrates, who will graciously extend over them a virtuous administration; but the checks and restraints by which the popular rights are guarded in every free government, are effectually removed. They were thus taken away in the church by the organization now under consideration. The people had no adequate protection against the exercise of arbitrary power, nor any available mode of redress, under the injustice to which they stood exposed.

But the clergy enjoyed many privileges, by which on the one hand they were in a measure shielded from the operation of the law, and on the other, were entrusted with civil and judicial authority over the laity. Three particulars are stated by Planck.

1. In certain civil cases they exercised a direct jurisdiction over the laity.

2. The state submitted entirely to them the adjudication of all offences of the laity, of a religious nature.

3. Certain other cases, styled ecclesiastical, *causae ecclesiasticae*, were tried before them exclusively.

The practical influences of this arrangement, and its effects

[3] Gesell. Verfass. I. S. 452, 453.

upon the clergy and the laity, are detailed by the same author, to whom we must refer the reader.[4]

(*c*) The laity were separated injuriously from the control of the revenues which they contributed for the maintenance of the government of the church, and for charitable purposes.

This obnoxious feature in the ecclesiastical polity which prevailed at this time, has been already mentioned. It is, obviously, an equitable principle, that every man or body of men should be at liberty to do as they will with their own. This principle requires every government that respects the rights of the people, to submit to them, in some form, the control of the revenue. To deny them this right is injustice, oppression, unmitigated despotism. The hierarchy was a spiritual despotism, which completed the subjugation of people, by depriving them of a just participation in the disbursement of the revenues of the church. All measures of this nature, instead of originating with the people, as in all popular governments, began and ended with the priesthood.[5] The wealth of the laity was now made to flow in streams into the church. New expedients were devised to draw money from them.[6] Constantine himself also contributed large sums to enrich the coffers of that church, which he also authorized, A. D. 321, to inherit property by will.[7] This permission opened new sources of wealth to the clergy, while it presented equal in-

[4] Gesell. Verfass. I. S. 308 seq.

[5] Conc. Gan. Can. 7, 8. Bracar. 11. c. 7. The above canons clearly indicate the unjust and oppressive operation of this system.

[6] It was a law of the church in the fourth century, that the laity should, every Sabbath, partake of the sacrament; the effect of which law was to augment the revenues of the church, each communicant being required to bring his *offering* to the altar. Afterwards, when this custom was discontinued, the offering was still claimed.—*Cong. Agath.* A. D. 585. c. 4.

[7] Cod. Theod. 4, 16. Tit. 2, C. 4. Euseb. Lib. 10. 6. Sozomen, Lib. 1. c. 8. Lib. 5. 5.

captives to their cupidity. With what address they employed their newly-acquired rights is apparent from the fact stated by Planck, "that in the space of ten years every man, at his decease, left a legacy to the church; and, within fifty years the clergy in the several provinces, under the color of the church, held in their possession one *tenth part* of the entire property of the province. By the end of the fourth century, the emperors themselves were obliged to interpose to check the accumulation of these immense revenues:—a measure which Jerome said he could not regret, but he could only regret that his brethren had made it necessary."[8] Many other expedients were employed to check this insatiable cupidity, but they only aggravated the evil which they were intended to remove.

(*d*) The system in question was not only a violation of the natural rights of the laity, but it was equally injurious to their spiritual interests.

If it be important that the people should appoint their rulers in civil government, much more is it, that they should control the appointment of those who are to be over them in the Lord. It is a serious objection to this system that it interfered with this religious privilege. The clergy were appointed by the bishop; and the bishop again, was elected by the clergy. The intervention of the people was often a mere form, and even the form itself was finally discontinued. A ministry imposed in this manner upon a people, must of necessity be coldly received and comparatively barren in its results. This topic opens a fruitful subject of remark, but it has already come under consideration, and we submit it without further notice to the reflections of the reader.

(*e*) The tendency of this form of government was to render the laity indifferent to the religious interests of the church.

[8] Gesell. Verfass. I. S. 281. Comp. Pertsch, Kirch. Hist. sec. 11. c. 9.

It left them no part in administering the concerns of the church; and the consequence seems inevitable, that they would do little for the promotion of its purity. The moral obligation rested, indeed, upon them, but they naturally, and almost necessarily, became in a great measure insensible to it, having little opportunity to act directly in the fulfilment of their duty. If scandals abounded, it belonged not to them to remove them. If a case of discipline occurred, its management began and ended with the clergy. Everything tended to separate the laity from the care of the church; and practically to influence them to neglect the duty of watching and striving together for the maintenance of practical godliness among all its members. Their religious and covenant obligations, if acknowledged, pressed not upon them with the interest of an urgent and present duty. Such also was the severity of the penalties which the system of penance inflicted that, by mutual consent, they connived at the offences of the church, and concealed them, to prevent the bishops from exercising their authority in this way; and thus the discipline of the church came to be neglected.

(*f*) The tendency of the system was to sunder the private members of the church from each other, and to interfere with their mutual fellowship and watchfulness.

The connection of each member of the church was, at its commencement, a transaction between him and his bishop or presbyter. The ordinary members of the church, having no agency in the transaction, could have little oneness of feeling or union of spirit, with those who were, from time to time, enrolled on the records of the church. They were received to the *ordinances* of the church, rather than to the fellowship, the confidence and affection of brethren, one with them in heart, in sympathy and Christian love. The estrangement under such circumstances is mutual. Nor is it easy to see how there could be that blending of spirit and flow of love among all the members, and that mutual watchfulness for

each other's welfare, which Christ designed as one of the richest privileges of Christian fellowship.

This mutual estrangement, and the general neglect of Christian watchfulness and discipline which dishonored the church at this time, are forcibly exhibited by Eusebius, who lived in the age now under consideration; he says,—"After Christianity through too much liberty was changed into laxness and sloth—then began men to envy and revile one another; and to wound one another as if with arms and spears in actual warfare. Then bishop arose against bishop, and church against church. Great tumult prevailed, and hypocrisy and dissimulation were carried to the highest pitch. And then began the divine vengeance, as is usual, to visit us; and such was the condition of the church that the most part came not freely together."[9]

"As things now are," says Chrysostom, "all is corrupted and lost. The church is little else than a stall for cattle, or a fold for camels and asses; and when I go out in search of sheep I find none. All are rampant and refractory as herds of horses and wild asses; everything is filled with their abounding corruptions."[10] Similar sentiments occur abundantly in the writers of the third and fourth centuries, and in the ages following.

(*g*) This system was a gross infringement on the right of private judgment in religion.

It was a law strictly enforced that every layman should believe blindly, without inquiry, without evidence, all that the church, represented by the bishop in synod, should prescribe. The evidence he was not competent to examine. Here is the origin of that papal policy which denies the Bible to the laity, and the pattern of that "*prudent reserve*" which Puseyism inculcates in preaching the gospel to the common people. The exercise of one's private judgment, leading him

[9] Eccl. Hist. 8. c. 1.

[10] Chrysostom, Hom. 89, in Math. Vol. VII. p. 830.

to dissent from the prescribed articles, was not only regarded as a heinous sin, but as a violation of the law of the state, punishable with severe penalties.[11]

"In endeavoring by the secular arm, to compel all the Christians to entertain the same speculative opinions, on the questions then debated, the sovereigns at once turned free discussions into controversy and strife. They inflamed instead of extinguishing party spirit. They formally divided the church into sects. They entailed the disputes of their own times, as an inheritance of sorrow to posterity, and wrote INTOLERANCE over the portal of the house of God."[12]

2. Results of the metropolitan government upon the clergy.

The clergy, under this system, appear in many respects in strong contrast with the ministry of the apostolical and primitive churches.

(*a*) Their grades of office are greatly multiplied. Instead of *two classes*, of ecclesiastical officers, as the ordinary ministers of the church, there are now many, in different degrees of rank, defined with the precision and guarded with the caution almost of military or naval discipline. The increase of the churches would, of necessity, require a corresponding increase in the number of its ministers. So that even in the second century, there were Christian churches which had twenty or thirty presbyters and sometimes as many deacons.[13] This latter class, however, was more generally limited to the number of seven.[14] But we have now several entirely new classes of officers in the church, *sub-deacons*, *acolyths*, *readers*, *exorcists*, *door-keepers*, etc. To these were subsequently

[11] Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. Lib. 7. c. 6. Codex Theodosian, L. 16. tit. 3. l. 2.

[12] Rev. Thomas Hardy, cited in Dr. Brown's Law of Christ, respecting civil obedience, p. 512.

[13] Christ. Antiq. Art. Deacons, chap. 3. § 10. p. 107 seq.

[14] The church at Rome under Cornelius, A. D. 250, had 46 presbyters, 7 deacons, 7 sub-deacons, 42 clerks, besides 52 exorcists, readers, janitors, etc. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 6. c. 43.

added many others, *advocates*, *σύνδικοι*, *apocrisiarii*, *cimeliarchs*, *custodes*, *mansionarii*, *notorii*, *oiconomoi*, *syncelli*, etc., etc. The specific duties of these several officers are briefly stated in the author's Antiquities of the Christian Church,[15] and more at length in the larger works of Bingham, Augusti, Siegel and Boehmer. These new offices, some of which were merely titular, had their origin, not in the exigencies of the church, but from other causes, which indicate still further changes in the ministry and the existing government, that remain to be mentioned. To one of these, allusion has already been made, but it requires a more specific consideration.

(*b*) The distinctions between the different orders of the clergy are drawn with great care, and cautiously guarded.

The councils of the period abound with canons defining the boundaries of the several grades of the clergy. Henceforward history is especially employed in describing their errors and disputes. Gregory Nazianzen, A. D. 360, in view of these ambitious contentions, exclaims, "How I wish there had been no precedence, no priority of place, no authoritative dictatorship, that we might be distinguished by virtue alone. But now this right hand, and left hand, and middle, and higher and lower, this going before and going in company, have produced to us much unprofitable affliction,—brought many into a snare, and thrust them out among the herd of the goats; and these, not only of the inferior order, but even of the shepherds, who, though masters in Israel, have not known these things."[16] "I am worn out—with contending against the envy of the holy bishops; disturbing the public peace by their contentions, and subordinating the Christian faith to their own private interests." . . . "If I must write the whole truth, I am determined to absent myself from all assemblies of the bishops; for I have never seen a happy result of any councils, nor any that did not occasion an increase

[15] Chapter IV. pp. 119—130. [16] Orat. 28. Vol. I. p. 484.

of evils, rather than a reformation of them by reason of these pertinacious contentions, and this vehement thirst for power, such as no words can express."[17]

(*c*) The clergy manifest a strong party feeling.

There is an *esprit du corps*, which separates them in interest and feeling from the lower orders of officers and from the private members of the church. They have become one party, and the church another; each with their separate interests. And these, too often, are contrary, the one to the other. This spirit manifested itself particularly in their synods, where the bishops sought to depress as much as possible the other orders of the clergy. Even when they had occasion to inflict censure upon one of their own number, the hierarchy never forgot the interests of their order, in respect to the other.[18] On the other hand, many rules were prescribed regulating the relative rank of the presbyters, deacons and subordinate officers; and the violation of these rules was punished with increasing frequency and severity. For proof of this, reference may be had to the councils of Elvira, Neocaesarea and Nice.[19]

"They (the bishops) had the means of carrying any measure for their own advantage; and, while they continued united, it was not easy for a whole church, even, and much more for a single individual of the clergy, or of the laity, to oppose them. Even if a whole church came into collision with their bishop, they must submit to the decision of the provincial synod, of the metropolitan, and also of his fellow-bishops. The danger was, that these all, and even the churches of the province, would agree in a coalition against the party who began the prosecution; so that, in the end,

[17] Ep. Philagrio, 65. al. 59. p. 823, and Ep. Procopio, 55. al. 42. p. 814.

[18] Conc. Antioch. c. 1. Synod. Gangr. c. 7, 8. Conc. Chalcedon, c. 8. Conc. Const. c. 6.

[19] Comp. Conc. Laodic. c. 20, 42, 56.

they would be excluded from the bonds of Christian fellowship. Who can suppose that the bishops could be men, and not act, in such circumstances, for the interests of their order?"[20]

Is it at all easier now for a layman to oppose successfully the will of the bishop? Is not his authority as absolute now as then, and his will as certainly carried into effect? Let the records of the late convention at New York be consulted for a reply.

(*d*) Under this system, strong temptations are presented to the lower orders of the clergy, to become the sycophants of the higher for the promotion of their own interests.

The inevitable consequence of entrusting the offices of the church to the arbitrary control of the bishops, is to surround them with a crowd of parasites eager to secure their favor.

"They flatter the rulers, they affectionately salute the influential, they carefully wait upon the rich; the glory of God they disregard; his worship they defile, religion they profane, Christian love they destroy. Their ambition is insatiable; they are ever striving after honor and fame. They aspire to be high in office; and, to accomplish this end, spare not to excite the worst of enmities among the best of friends."[21] This is said by a Roman bishop, of his own clergy; and Gregory Nazianzen, at an earlier period, charges them with flattering the great and crouching to them in every way. "But when they had others in their power, then were they more savage than lions. They joined one party or another for the slightest reasons, like the polypus that can assume any color according to circumstances."[22] At another time he describes them as "seducing flatterers, flexible as a bough,

[20] Planck, Gesell. Verfass. I. S. 179. Comp. p. 129. Ziegler's Versuch. etc. S. 56, 57.

[21] Leo VII. Epist. ad Episc. Bavar. ap. Aventinum et in Catal. Test. Vet. p. 209. Cited in Arnold's Wahre Abbildung, S. 919.

[22] Objurgat. in cler. Cited in Wahre Abbildung, S. 918.

savage as a lion to the weak, cringing as a dog to the powerful, who knock at the doors, not of the learned, but of the great, and value highest, not what is useful, but what is pleasing to others."[23]

"Wherever," says Robert Hall, "religion is established by law, with splendid emoluments and dignities annexed to its profession, the clergy, who are candidates for these distinctions, will ever be prone to exalt the prerogative, not only in order to strengthen the arm on which they lean, but that they may the more successfully ingratiate themselves in the favor of the prince, by flattering those ambitious views and passions which are too readily entertained by persons possessed of supreme power. The boasted alliance between church and state, on which so many encomiums have been lavished, seems to have been little more than a compact between the priest and the magistrate to betray the liberties of mankind, both civil and religious. To this the clergy on their part at least have continued steady, shunning inquiry, fearful of change, blind to the corruptions of government, skilful to *discern the signs of the times*, and eager to improve every opportunity, and to employ all their art and eloquence to extend the prerogative and smooth the approaches of arbitrary power."

(*e*) It is an objectionable feature of this system, that the clergy are entrusted with the exercise of both ecclesiastical and civil powers.

Constantine gave to the bishops the right of deciding in secular matters, making them the highest court of judicature, and ordering that their judgment should be final and decisive as that of the emperor himself,[24] whose officers were accordingly required to execute these decisions.[25]

[23] De Episcopis, p. 1031. Ed. Basil. 1571. Ed. Colon. 1590. Vol. II. p. 304.

[24] *Κρείτω τῆς τῶν ἄλλων δικαστῶν ὠσανεὶ παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως ἐξενεχθεῖσαν.*

[25] Sozomen, Lib. 1. c. 29. Com. Valesius, in Euseb. De Vit. Const. c. 27.

To what height the authority of the clergy finally rose in the government of the state we need not say. With the union of church and state under Constantine, the way was opened for the exercise of clerical influence in many ways, over the secular interests of both. Enough was done to excite in the bishops an ambition for worldly power, and scope sufficient was given for the play of the most dangerous passions. The details we must leave the reader to pursue in the histories of the church. Siegel has mentioned one crafty device, which sufficiently discovers the aspirations of prelatical ambition after political power. This was the rule which required "the subordinate clergy to obtain permission from the metropolitan to pay their visits to the emperor." The design of this expedient was manifest—to overrule the appeals of the inferior clergy to Cæsar, by hindering them in their approaches to him. In short, the policy of the bishops was to embarrass others as much as possible, in making appeal to the civil authority, while they themselves employed it to accomplish their own party purposes. "The bishop, for example, has some measure to carry, which he foresees will be opposed by others. He goes, therefore, to the palace and obtains from the emperor a decree in his own name, formed agreeably to the will of the bishops. At another time, a new doctrine is to be put forth under the sanction of the whole church, as an article of faith. From this others dissent, and declare it to be erroneous. The bishop now makes interest at the palace, either to have a synod called by authority of the emperor to decide the point, or a decree comes direct from the court, declaring the article in question *orthodox*, and denouncing all who dissent from it as heretics. More frequently a presbyter would be a bishop, or a bishop of a small and feeble church would be promoted to a higher and richer. But seeing that this in the ordinary course of things cannot be accomplished, he applies again to the palace, and has the address to obtain a recommendation, which has all the form

of a command, or else an explicit decree, by virtue of which without further trouble, he is advanced to his desired place.

"Hundreds of cases to this effect occur in the history of the fourth and fifth centuries. And all this as any one must see, was entirely natural, according to the ordinary course of things. When so often availing themselves of this right of appeal to the emperors as they did, could the bishops fail to remember that they could in this way, not only serve the church, but promote also their own convenience, and the furtherance of their designs?"[26]

(*f*) A secular and mercenary spirit now dishonors the clergy.

The history of the times abounds with examples of those who neglected or forsook their sacred duties, to engage in secular pursuits for mercenary purposes. So prevalent was this spirit among the clergy, that the council of Eliberis, A. D. 305, saw reason to rebuke and restrain it, by requiring them, if they must engage in trade, to confine their operations to their own province.[27]

"The church that before by insensible degrees welked and impaired, now with large steps went down hill decaying; at this time Antichrist began first to put forth his horn, and that saying was common, that former times had wooden chalices and golden priests; but they, golden chalices and wooden priests. 'Formerly,' says Sulpitius, speaking of these times, 'martyrdom by glorious death was sought more greedily than now bishoprics by vile ambition are hunted after,' and in another place, 'they gape after possessions, they tend lands and livings, they hoard up their gold, they buy and sell; and if there be any that neither possess money nor traffic, what is

[26] Planck, Gesell. Verfass. I. S. 269—271. Comp. S. 453, 454. Conc. Antioch, c. 11, 12.

[27] Conc. Eliberis, c. 4. Comp. Conc. Aurel. 3. c. 27. Basil the Great complains that some of the bishops administered ordination for hire,—making even this "grace" an article of merchandize. A practice which he justly condemns.—*Ep.* 53. Vol. III. p. 147.

worse, they sit still and accept gifts, and prostitute eve dowment of grace, every holy thing to venal purposes.' he concludes; 'all things went to rack by the faction, wilfulness and avarice of the bishops; and by this means God's people and every good man was held in scorn and derision.'"[28]

(*g*) The disposition of the bishops to torture and pervert the language of Scripture to give importance to their order, is worthy of particular notice.

Their reference to the Jewish priesthood, and the analogies which they sought from the Mosaic economy to justify their own ecclesiastical polity, have been already mentioned. From the same source sprang the conceit of the divine right of Episcopacy, of the apostolical succession, and of the validity and necessity of Episcopal ordination. On these topics another shall speak whose sentiments have been so often cited, and who has written on the constitution of the church more at length and with greater ability than any other historian. After adverting to their reference to the Jewish priesthood, to the transfer of the names of that priesthood to the clergy of the Christian church, and to the analogies which were sought out between the chief priests of the temple, and the bishops of the church, Planck proceeds to say: "It is easy to see, and was foreseen, what advantages they might gain if they could once bring this notion into circulation—that the bishops and presbyters were set apart not by the church, *but by God himself*;[29]—that they held their office, and the rights of their office, from God and not from the church,—that they were not the servants of the church, but ordained of God to be its overseers, and appointed by him to be the guardians of its sanctity,—that the service of the ministry for this new religion must be performed altogether by them, and by their body,—and therefore, that they must of necessity constitute themselves a distinct order, and form a sepa-

[28] Milton's Prose Works, Vol. I. p. 22.

[29] It was a favorite sentiment of Cyprian, that God makes the priests. Deus qui sacerdotes facit.—*Epist.* 69, 52.

rate caste in the church;—all this was clearly manifest to their minds; and, accordingly, they sought out with all diligence, the analogies from which all these consequences could so easily be drawn.

"In view of the obvious advantages which the bishops would gain from the prevalence of such sentiments, one is not surprised that Cyprian sought so much to propagate them in his day. Having, therefore, so much interest in the promulgation of these sentiments, from which proceeded, as a necessary consequence, the *divine right* of their office, the bishops found means more fully to establish them by claiming to be *the successors of the apostles.* They accordingly began now, for the first time, to promulgate, with a specific intent, this doctrine of the apostolical succession. The bishops had, indeed, from the beginning of the second century,[30] appropriated to themselves the title of the successors of the apostles, but it occurred to no one, and least of all to them, that they had of right inherited the authority of the apostles, and were instated in all their rights. These claims, however, were not only put forth before the middle of the third century as an acknowledged right, but the bishops carefully availed themselves of the advantages resulting from an inheritance of the apostolical succession.

"One of the advantages claimed was the exclusive right of ordination. This favorite doctrine has ever since held a conspicuous place among their rights in the church. Indeed, it has been the ruling sentiment of the Episcopal hierarchy,—the foundation of this entire theory of an ecclesiastical ministry. The church were taught to believe that the

[30] This author supposes the distinction between bishop and presbyter to have prevailed from the beginning—a distinction, however, appropriately implying no official superiority. "The bishop perhaps regarded himself as somewhat different from a presbyter, but not at all superior to him. He thought himself more than a presbyter, only inasmuch as he had more to do than a presbyter."—*Gesell. Verfass.* Bd. 1. S. 31.

right in question was borrowed from the ancient Jews; and that the apostles, by means of it, had originally inducted bishops and presbyters into office.[31] They were taught that the laying on of hands was, not merely a symbolical rite, but that it must be regarded as a religious act, having in itself a certain efficacy, by which the individual upon whom it had been rightly performed was not only invested with all the rights of the office, but was also rendered competent to impart to others the same clerical grace. In a word, a mysterious and supernatural power was ascribed to this laying on of hands, by which the Holy Spirit was transmitted to the person who received ordination from them; just as the apostles, by the laying on of their hands, communicated the gift of working miracles. Acts 8: 17. 10: 47.

"When once the bishops had come to be regarded as the *successors* of the apostles, they could easily lay claim also to the prerogatives and gifts of the apostles. Hence the doctrine that none but the bishops could administer a valid ordination; for they, by being constituted the successors of the apostles, had alone the power, by the laying on of the hands, to impart a similar gift, with ability to transmit it unimpaired to others. In order more deeply to impress the new doctrine upon the minds of the people, or to inspire them with a firmer belief in it, they took care also to administer the right of ordination with the appearance of greater formality and solemnity. This, in all probability, was the true reason for the custom of saying, in the laying on of the hands, *Accipe Sanctum Spiritum*, Receive the Holy Ghost!

"In the same connection came also the suggestion, that it was important, not merely for the bishops, but for the presbyters and deacons also to receive ordination.[32] They were

[31] Potestas Apostolis data est . . . et episcopis, qui eis vicaria ordinatione successerunt.—*Cyprian*, Ep. 75.

[32] Cyprian at least admonished the deacons to remember that God appointed the apostles, i. e., the *bishops*, but the deacons were con-

accordingly ordained. The subordinate orders who had lately been instituted in the clergy, received also a kind of ordination. For, so far as the people could be impressed with a sense of the mysterious influence of this ceremony, they would regard him who had received the ordinance as another being, no longer on an equality with them; and so the great end designed by all these things would be accomplished—*that of impressing more deeply upon the minds of the people that the clergy are a peculiar class of persons, set apart by God himself as a distinct order in the church.*"[33]

(*h*) The clergy manifest an intolerant, persecuting spirit.

It is the legitimate effect of such pretensions as have been specified in the foregoing article. Dissent from their doctrines becomes a denial of God's truth; disobedience to their authority, rebellion against God; and heresy, the most heinous of sins. Accordingly, the great strife now is to guard against the spread of heretical opinions. He who ventures to promulgate them, fails not to draw down upon himself the severest penalties that can be inflicted by prelatical power. The history of the church, from the fourth century, downward, is little else than a tedious recital of endless discussions of forms of expression and of doctrines, by which the church was perpetually agitated, together with a humiliating exhibition of the bigotry and fiery zeal with which the charge of heresy was prosecuted. Many, according to Epiphanius, were expelled from the church for a single word or two, which might seem to be contrary to the faith.[34] The charges were

stituted the ministers of the church by the apostles. Apostolos, id est episcopos Dominus elegit; Diaconos autem apostoli sibi constituerunt ministros.—*Ep.* 9.

[33] Gesell. Verfass. I. S. 157—163.

[34] Epist. ad Johan. Hieros. Vol. II. Op. p. 314. The least deviation from the prescribed formularies and creeds of the church was heresy, according to the famous law of Arcadius, A. D. 395. Haeritici sunt qui vel levi argumento a ju icio catholicae re igion's et tramite detecti fuerint deviare.—*Cod. Theodos.* L. 16. tit. V. de Haeret. 6, 28.

frequently groundless, often contemptible; and so multifarious, withal, that it might be difficult to say what in human conduct or belief has not been branded as heresy. For a priest to appear in worship without his surplice was heresy.[35] To fast on Saturday, or Sunday, "heresy, and a damnable thing."[36] And yet this indefinite, indescribable sin, called heresy, was enough, not only to expel one from the church but to drive him into exile from his kindred and his country, the victim of relentless intolerance. This zeal for truth was quickened, also, by that avarice which seized upon his house, his lands, his property of every description, and confiscated it for the benefit, ostensibly, of the church, but really, as a gratuity to the pious zeal of his clerical persecutors.[37] When this failed to reach him, the arm and the sword of civil justice were invoked against him. Thus was he persecuted, even unto death, by the exterminating zeal of prelatical bigotry. The reader will find in the Codex of Theodosius enough to verify all, and much more than all, that has been said on this subject; or in the ancient history of Socrates, to say nothing of the modern histories of Neander, and others.

And yet, under this treatment, as might have been foreseen, heresies came up into the church like the frogs of Egypt. Epiphanius, who, in the fourth century, wrote several books against heresies, announces no less than *eighty distinct kinds of heresy*. But the most obnoxious feature of this rage against heresy, is, that it often became only a persecuting intolerance of the pious, whose religious life rebuked the godless ministry that was over them. "One may see," says Jerome, "in most of the cities, bishops and pres-

[35] Apoph. Pat. apud Cotelerium, T. 1. Mon. Graec. p. 684.

[36] Nomo Canon, Gr. apud eundem, c. 129.

[37] Cod. Theodos. L. 16. tit. 5, 6, 43, 52, 57. A full statement of these persecutions is given in Vol. VI. p. 118. Leipsic, 1743. Socrat. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 7. c. 7.

byters, who, when they perceive the laity to seek the society of the pious, and hospitably to entertain them, immediately become jealous, and murmur against them, lay them under bans, and thrust them out of the church; so that one can do no more than what the bishop or overseer does. But to live a virtuous life is sure to provoke the displeasure of these priests; so unmerciful are they towards these poor men, and seize them by the neck, as if they would draw them away from all that is good, and harass them with all manner of persecutions."[38]

3. State of religion under the hierarchy.

The preceding remarks have been made, with reference, particularly, to the mutual relations of the clergy and the laity under this government, and the practical effects of it upon them both. The inquiry now is, in regard to their religious character, and the state of morals and religion generally in the church. One would gladly pass in silence over this view of the subject. We surely have no pleasure in contemplating the deformities of the Christian character, in any circumstances; much less in reciting the general degeneracy of the church in this age, and the shocking immoralities which so frequently dishonored the lives of all classes, both of the clergy and the people. One might almost wish, that, in the lapse of time, a veil, even of deeper darkness, had been spread over the church, so that her deformity might be seen no more. But it is seen and known; and it remains for us to pause, not that we may exult over the fall of the church, but that we may take warning from the example, and guard against a similar catastrophe.

The great evil of this organization was, that it opened the way for the introduction of irreligious men into the ministry, and offered many inducements to them to enter into the sacred service of the church. It offered to the aspiring the fairest prospect of preferment to honor, wealth, and power, both civil

[38] Comment. in Epist. 1 ad Tit.

and ecclesiastical; and the necessary consequence was a degenerate ministry. Planck, with great propriety, remarks: "It was a thing of course, that all would strive for admission into that order which was in the enjoyment of such wealth, and power, and distinction."[39] This was the great evil of this whole system of church-government. *Hinc illi prima mali labes*,—hence, the source and fountain of that tide of corruption which came in upon the church like an overwhelming flood.[40] The instances that have already been mentioned, clearly indicate the degeneracy of the clergy, which appears more fully in the following particulars.

(*a*) Their pride; their haughty, supercilious, and ostentatious bearing.

Every effort was made to exalt the dignity of the bishops. They assumed the titles of priests, high-priests, apostles, successors of the apostles; their highness, their excellence, their worthiness, their reverence, the enthroned, the height of the highest dignity, the culminating point of pontifical glory;—these were the terms of base adulation employed to set forth the dignity of these ministers of Christ.[41] They had separate seats and *princely thrones* in the church. All rose to do them reverence as they came in, and stood until the bishops were seated, and often the people were required to *stand* in the presence of the bishops.[42] They were decked out in gor-

[39] Gesell. Verfass. 1. 332.

[40] Comp. Mosheim, De Rebus Christ., Saec. III. § 25.

[41] Pertsch, Can. Recht. 49. More at length, in his Kirch. Hist., Saec. II. c. 3. § 15, 16, 18.

[42] The following canon of the council of Maçon, A. D. 581, dictated, as they gravely tell us, by the Holy Spirit, is sufficient to illustrate the artifices of this kind to secure the respect of the people: Et quia ordinationi sacerdotum annuente deo congruit de omnibus disponere et causis singulis honestum terminum dare, ut per hos reverentissimos canones et praeteritorum canonum viror ac florida germina maturis fructibus enitescant, statuimus ut si quis saecularium quempiam clericorum honoratorum in itinere obviam habuerit, usque ad inferiorem gradum honoris veneranter sicut condecet Christianum

geous apparel, and even suspended sacred relics from their shoulders, to impress the multitude with a more profound reverence for their order.[43] "The bishops," says Jerome, A. D. 400, "by their pride and their base deeds, are a reproach to their name. In the place of humility they manifest pride, as though they had acquired honor and not disgrace; and whenever they perceive one to have gained an influence by rightly handling the word of God, they seek, by detraction to oppose him. The people of God are dispersed by the abounding immoralities and heresies of the day, while no good shepherd appears, to lay down his life for the sheep; but they are all hirelings, watching only for gain from the flock, and when they see the wolf coming they flee."[44]

(*b*) Their ignorance, and incompetence rightly to discharge the duties of their office.

The clerical office, and especially that of a bishop became an object of covetous desire, for reasons wholly unlike those which made it desirable in the eyes of the apostle. The consequence was, that by favoritism, intrigue and cunning, many found their way into office who were wholly unqualified for it; and the church was afflicted with an incompetent and unworthy ministry.[45] While mere boys, they were sometimes in-

illi colla subdat, per cujus officia et obsequia fidelissima christianitatis jura promeruit. Et si quidem ille saecularis equo vehitur clericusque similiter, saecularis galerum de capite auferat et clerico sincerae salutationis munus adhibeat. Si vero clericus pedes graditur et saecularis vehitur equo sublimis, illico ad terram defluat et debitum honorem praedicto clerico sincerae caritatis exhibeat, ut deus, qui vera caritas est, in utrisque laetetur, et dilectioni suae utrumque adsciscat. Qui vero haec quae *spiritu sancto dictante* sancita sunt transgredi voluerit, ab ecclesiae quam in suis ministris dehonorat, quamdiu episcopus illius ecclesiae voluerit suspendatur.—C. 15, *Bruns*, Vol. II. p. 254. The gradations of rank which were observed with so much precision, were made subservient to the same end, and indicate the same spirit. Comp. Planck, I. p. 358—368.

[43] Conc. Bracar. 3. c. 5.

[44] Lib. 2. in Ezech. c. 34. Vol. III. p. 943.

[45] Conc. Tol. 4. c. 19.

vested with the clerical office, so that the fourth council of Toletum, A. D. 633, by solemn enactment, provides for their education, and training for their duties.[46] "No physician," says Gregory Nazianzen, A. D. 370, "finds employment until he has acquainted himself with the nature of diseases; no painter, until he has learned to mix colors, and acquired skill in the use of the pencil. But a bishop is easily found. No preparation is requisite for his office. In a single day we make one a priest, and exhort him to be wise and learned, while he knows nothing; and brings no needful qualification for his office, but a desire to be a bishop.[47] They are teachers, while yet they have to learn the rudiments of religion. Yesterday, impenitent, irreligious; and to-day, priests; old in vice; in knowledge young."[48] "They are, in their ministry, dull; in evil speaking, active; in study, much at leisure; in seductions, busy; in love, cold; in factions, powerful; in hatred and enmity, constant; in doctrine wavering. They profess to govern the church, but have need themselves to be governed by others."[49]

(*c*) The total neglect of Christian discipline, and the general corruption of the church, were the necessary consequences of a secular ministry.

In this respect, the state of the church under the metropolitan government appears in melancholy contrast with its early purity. "Formerly, the church of Christ was distinguished from the world by her piety. Then, the walk of all, or of most Christians was holy, unlike that of the irreligious. But now are Christians as base, and, if possible, even worse than

[46] Nos, et divinae legis, et conciliorum praecepti immemores infantes et pueros, levitas facimus ante legitimam aetatem ante experientiam vitae.—*Conc. Tol.* 4. c. 20.

[47] Orat. 20, De Basil. Ed. Colon. 1590. p. 335.

[48] Orat. 21. In laud. Athanas. p. 378.

[49] Sidonius Apollinaris, A. D. 486, Lib. 7. Ep. 9. Biblioth. Vet. Pat. VI. p. 1112. Comp. Mosheim, De Rebus Christ., Saec. III. § 26.

heretics and heathen."[50] "How unlike themselves are Christians now," says Salvianus, A. D. 460. "How fallen from what they once were! when we might rejoice, and account the church as quite pure, if it had only as many good as bad men in it. But it is hard and sad to say, that the church which ought, in all things, to be well pleasing to God, does little else than provoke his displeasure."[51] This is but a faint sketch of his complaint. Much more to the same effect is said by this writer, and confirmed by others, which we gladly pass in silence. Enough of this sad tale of the degeneracy of the church, of which the half has not been told. "No language," says Chrysostom, "can describe the angry contentions of Christians, and the corruption of morals that prevailed, from the time of Constantine to that of Theodosius."[52]

Of grosser enormities we forbear to speak. Much that is recorded both of the clergy and the people, in the period now under consideration, cannot with propriety, be transferred to these pages. Suffice it to say, there is evidence sufficient to show that a shocking degeneracy of morals pervaded all classes of society. It began, confessedly, with the clergy,—in their worldliness and irreligion, their neglect of duty, their departure from the faith, and corrupt example.[53] From the time of Constantine, the tide of corruption, which had begun to set in upon the church, became deep and strong, and continued to rise and swell, until it well-nigh overwhelmed her. There were still examples, indeed, of men high in office in the church, who nobly strove to turn back this flood of iniquity; but they too frequently strove in vain, as their lamentations over her degeneracy plainly show. Among her pri-

[50] Chrysostom Hom. 49, in Math. Vol. VI. p. 204. Opus imp. Hom. in Ps. 61. Vol. I. p. 195.

[51] Lib. 6. De Gub. Dei in Biblioth. Pat. Vet. Vol. VIII. p. 362 seq.

[52] Hom. 49, in Math. p. 202. Opus imperfectum.

[53] Chrysostom expressly says, that they were the cause of this degeneracy of the laity. In Math. 23. Comp. also, Catal. Test. Verit. p. 77.

vate members, also, there still remained, no doubt, many faithful followers of Christ, who have, in heaven, their high reward, however history may have failed to record the honored memorial of their virtues.

Wearied, however, with the oppressive hand of prelatical power that was upon her, and sickened at the sight of the ungodliness which had come up into the church, and sat enthroned in her high places, the pure spirit of piety withdrew, in silent sadness, to the cloistered cell, drew the curtains, and reposed in her secret recesses, through the long night of darkness that settled upon the world.

This religious declension, of which we have spoken, it should be well considered, could not have come over the church so generally through the operation of any one cause alone. It is the combined result of various causes. But that the ecclesiastical polity that early supplanted the government originally established by the apostles, was one efficient cause of this degeneracy, we cannot doubt. It filled the church with corrupt and unworthy members, by first giving her an ignorant, ambitious priesthood, equally degenerate and corrupt.

The object of the Christian emperors was to bring all their subjects to embrace Christianity. But they totally mistook the means by which this work was to be accomplished. They sought to do it by state patronage; by making a professed faith in Christ the passport to favor and to power. To enter into the church of Christ, was, accordingly, to enjoy the favor and protection of the government; to hold her offices, was to bear rule in the state. The consequence was, that multitudes pressed up to the altar of the Lord, eager to be invested with the robes and the office of the Christian ministry, who had nothing of its spirit.[54]

Such was the wayward policy, the fatal mistake of the

[54] Comp. Sermon by Thomas Hardy, D.D. Cited in Dr. Brown's Law of Christ, pp. 511, 512.

first Christian emperors. Such were its disastrous results. My kingdom, saith Christ, is not of this world. Christianity, though mingling freely in the affairs of men, like its great Author, works its miracles of mercy and of grace by powers that are hidden and divine. It stoops to no carnal policy, no state chicanery, no corrupt alliances; while, like an angel of mercy, it goes through the earth, for the healing of the nations. To borrow the profound thoughts and beautiful language of Robert Hall, "Christianity will civilize, it is true; but it is only when it is allowed to develop the energies by which it sanctifies. Christianity will inconceivably ameliorate the condition of being. Who doubts it? Its universal prevalence, not in name, but in reality, will convert this world into a semi-paradisaical state; but it is only while it is permitted to prepare its inhabitants for a better. Let her be urged to forget her celestial origin and destiny, —to forget that she came from God, and returns to God; and, whether employed by the artful and enterprising, as the instrument of establishing a spiritual empire and dominion over mankind, or by the philanthropist, as the means of promoting their civilization and improvement,—she resents the foul indignity, claps her wings and takes her flight, leaving nothing but a base and sanctimonious hypocrisy in her room."[55]

[55] Address to Eustace Carey.

CHAPTER X.

THE PATRIARCHAL AND THE PAPAL GOVERNMENT.

I. The patriarchal government.

This form of the hierarchy we shall dismiss with a very brief notice. The principles on which it was based, and its characteristics, were essentially the same as those of the metropolitan. The state of the church under this organization has of necessity been anticipated in the preceding remarks. It was only a farther concentration of ecclesiastical power, another stage in the process of centralization, which was fast bringing the church under the absolute despotism of the Papacy. Man naturally aspires to the exercise of arbitrary power; or, if he must divide his authority with others, he seeks to make that number as small as possible. This disposition had already manifested itself in the church. In many of the provinces there were ecclesiastical aspirants among the higher orders of the clergy, who, even to the fifth century, had not established an undisputed title to the prerogatives of metropolitans. But the continual effort and strife of the bishops for a greater consolidation of ecclesiastical power ended in the establishment of an ecclesiastical oligarchy in the fifth century, under the form of the patriarchal government.[1]

In the course of the period from the fourth to the sixth cen-

[1] Comp. Planck, Gesell. Verfass. I. S. 598—624. Ziegler's Versuch. etc. S. 164—365.

tury, arose four great ecclesiastical divisions, whose primates bore the title of Patriarch. These were Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria and Antioch. Few topics of antiquity have been the subject of so much controversy as that relating to the patriarchal system, as may be seen in the works of Salmasius, Petavius, Sismondi, Scheelstrate, Richter and others. Suffice it to say, however, that the council of Chalcedon, A. D. 451, established five patriarchates. The council of Nice, A. D. 325, c. 6, 7, of Constantinople I, A. D. 381, c. 2, 5, and of Ephesus, A. D. 531, Act. 7, had already conferred the distinction without the title. The incumbents of these Episcopal Sees were already invested with civil powers. Theodosius the Great, conferred upon Constantinople the second rank, a measure greatly displeasing to Rome, and against which Alexandria and Antioch uniformly protested. Jerusalem had the honor and dignity of a patriarchate, but not the rights and privileges.[2]

The aspirations of prelatical ambition after sole and supreme power are sufficiently manifest in that bitter contest, which was so long maintained by the primates of Rome and Constantinople, for the title of universal patriarch or head of the church universal.[3] Great political events finally decided this controversy in the course of the fifth and sixth centuries in the West, and in the East in the seventh century in favor of the church of Rome. This decision resulted in the supremacy of the Pope and the establishment of the papal system.

II. The papal government.

This was the last refinement of cunning and self-aggrandize-

[2] Hence the Romans were accustomed to say, Patriarchae in ecclesia primitus fuere, tres per se et ex natura sua,—Romanus, Alexandrinus et Antiochenus; duo per accidens, Constantinopolitanus et Hierosolymitanus. Comp. Justinia. Nov. Constit. 123. Schroeckh, Kirch. Gesch. Thl. 17. S. 45, 46. Comp. Art. Patriarch, in the works of Augusti, Siegel, Rheinwald, W. Böhmer, etc.

[3] *Πατριάρχος τῆς οἰκουμένης*, episcopus oecumenicus, universalis ecclesiae papa, etc.

ment; the culminating point of ecclesiastical usurpation, towards which the government of the church under the Episcopal hierarchy had been for several centuries approaching. It was an ecclesiastical monarchy, a spiritual despotism, which completed the overthrow of the authority of individual churches as sovereign and independent bodies.[4]

The bishop of Rome was originally indebted, for his authority and power, to the emperor of the East; an indebtedness which he continued for some time to feel. The bishop of Constantinople, on the other hand, acted with more independence. In some instances, he successfully resisted the will of the emperor. But the decline of the Eastern empire greatly promoted the ambitious designs of the bishop of Rome and the extension of his power in Italy. Meanwhile the territorial government of the Eastern church was greatly reduced in the seventh and eighth centuries; the hopes of Constantinople and of her patriarch suffered a corresponding reduction. Territory after territory fell away and was lost. The dioceses of Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria were overrun with Mahomedanism. Thrace became tributary to Bulgaria, and Constantinople herself was besieged by the Saracens.

The bishop of Rome now began his splendid career. It commenced with the overthrow of the emperor's authority in Italy, and ended in results auspicious to this aspiring prelate beyond his most ardent expectation. The incursion of the Longobards into Italy favored greatly the designs of the Roman bishop; indeed, without the concurrence of this invasion, his hopes might never have been realized. The important results of this circumstance to the Pope, the decline of the Eastern empire by the dismemberment of different provinces, and the influence of Gregory and Zacharius in promoting the papal supremacy by means of the war respecting image worship and other devices, is very clearly exhibited by

[4] Comp. Planck, Gesell. Verfass. I. S. 624—673. Ziegler's Versuch. etc. S. 365—402.

Ziegler.[5] But Gregory III. surpassed all his predecessors in his political manœuvres. After making use of the invasion of the Longobards to reduce the power of the emperor, he took care to have them removed from the neighborhood of Rome, if not from Italy. Their presence had been the means of inspiring the people with a belief in the holiness of the Pope. The Franks were also deeply impressed with the same sentiments. It was accordingly the policy of Gregory to throw himself into the arms of the brave Charles Martel, that so the *secular* government of Rome might be removed as far as possible from the city. His next political manœuvre was, by the aid of the Franks, to expel the Longobards entirely from Italy. This crafty alliance of the Pope with Pepin, proved advantageous only to the designs of the prelate, and the chief means of establishing his secular power.[6]

This important point in history distinctly marks the date of the establishment of the papal power in Rome, which in the middle ages became so vast that all Europe trembled before it.

Thus, as we have seen, ecclesiastical history introduces first to our notice, single independent churches; then, churches having several dependent branches; then, diocesan churches; then, metropolitan or provincial churches; and then, national churches attempered to the civil power. In the end, we behold two great divisions of ecclesiastical empire, the Eastern and the Western, now darkly intriguing, now fearfully struggling with each other for the mastery, until at last the doctrine of the *unity* of the church is consummated in the sovereignty of the Pope of Rome, who alone sits enthroned in power, claiming to be the head of the church on earth. The government of the church was at first a democracy,

[5] Versuch. etc. S. 367.

[6] Comp. Ziegler as above. Bowers, Gesch. der Papste, 4v. Thl. S. 398 seq. Le Bret, Gesch. von Ital. 1v. Thl. S. 36 seq. Especially Hüllmann, Ursprünge der Verfass. in Mittelalter. Ranke's Hist. of Popes, B. 1. c. 1. § 7.

allowing to all its constituents the most enlarged freedom of a voluntary religious association. It became an absolute and iron despotism. The gradations of ecclesiastical organization through which it passed, were, from congregational to parochial—parochial to diocesan—diocesan to metropolitan—metropolitan to patriarchal—patriarchal to papal.

The corruptions and abominations of the church, through that long night of darkness which succeeded the triumph of the Pope of Rome, were inexpressibly horrible. The record of them may more fitly lie shrouded in a dead language, than be disclosed to the light in the living speech of men. The successors of St. Peter, as they call themselves, were frequently nominated to the chair of "his holiness" by women of infamous and abandoned lives. Not a few of them were shamefully immoral; and some, monsters of wickedness. Several were heretics, and others were deposed as usurpers. And yet this church of Rome, "with such ministers, and so appointed,—a church corrupt in every part and every particular,—individually and collectively,—in doctrine, in discipline, in practice,"—this church, prelacy recognizes as the only representative of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the period now under consideration, invested with all his authority, and exercising divine powers on earth! She boasts her ordinances, her sacraments, transmitted for a thousand years, unimpaired and uncontaminated, through such hands! High-Church Episcopacy proudly draws her own apostolical succession through this pit of pollution, and then the followers of Christ, who care not to receive such grace from such hands, she calmly delivers over to God's "uncovenanted mercies!" Nay more, multitudes of that communion are now engaged in the strange work of "unprotestantizing the churches" which have washed themselves from these defilements. The strife is, with a proud array of talents, of learning, and of Episcopal power, to bury all spiritual religion again in the grave of forms, to shroud the light of truth in the gloom of popish tradition, and to sink the

church of God once more into that abyss of deep and dreadful darkness from which she emerged at the dawn of the reformation. In the beautiful and expressive language of Milton, their strife is to "re-involve us in that pitchy cloud of infernal darkness where we shall never more see the sun of truth again, never hope for the cheerful dawn, never more hear the bird of morning sing."

REMARKS.

In connection with the view which we have taken of the rise and progress of the Episcopal system in the ancient church, we have a few things to remark upon its present characteristics and practical influence. Episcopacy, as it was in the beginning, appears to us to have been a lamentable departure from that form of government which the churches assumed originally, under the guidance of the apostles. Episcopacy, as it is now, though modified in various respects, appears to us still to retain many of its original characteristics, some of which we wish briefly to suggest.

1. We object to Episcopacy, as a departure from the order of the apostolical and primitive churches.

To our minds, nothing is plainer than that the government of the church, in the beginning, was not Episcopal. And, though we are not bound, by any divine authority, to an exact conformity with the primitive model, yet we cannot doubt that the apostles were guided by wisdom from above, in giving to the churches a different organization, popular in principle, simple in form, and better suited to the exigencies of the church in every condition of society.

While, therefore, with so much gravity and self-complacency, Episcopacy talks of her "adherence to the Holy Scriptures, and to apostolical usage," we must be permitted to object to her whole ecclesiastical polity, as an innovation

upon the scriptural system, and a total departure from the usage of the apostles, without any good reason, or beneficial results.

2. We object to Episcopacy, that it had its origin, not in divine authority, but in human ambition.

This is the true source from which it sprang in the ancient church. "First ambition crept in, which at length begat Antichrist, set him in the chair, and brought the yoke of bondage upon the neck of the church." This, to our minds, is a valid objection against Episcopacy. We cannot persuade ourselves, that a system, founded in human ambition, and reared and matured by human contrivance for sinister ends, should be suffered to set aside that order which God in the beginning gave to the Christian church, through the medium of Christ and his apostles.

3. Episcopacy removes the laity from a just participation in the government and discipline of the church.

The spirit of this system is to concentrate all power in the hands of the bishops and clergy; and there are not wanting portentous indications, that this spirit is at work, and this process of centralization still going on in our country. In England it was long since completed. Episcopacy is a government administered *for* the people,—the great expedient of despotism in every form. The government of the primitive church was administered *by* the people,—the great safeguard of popular freedom, whether civil or religious.

Discipline is also administered *for* the church by the clergy. But our confidence is in the laity, as the safest and best guardians of the purity of the church. We claim for them a right to co-operate with the clergy in all measures of discipline relating to their own body; and believe it to be both their right and their duty to control the censures of the church. In transferring this duty from the laity to the clergy, Episcopacy does great injustice to the private members of the church, and equal injury to the cause of pure and undefiled religion.

4. Episcopacy creates unjust distinctions among the clergy whose character and profession is the same.

The Scriptures authorize no distinction in the duties, privileges, or prerogatives of bishops, and priests or presbyters. The distinction is arbitrary and unjust: It denies to a portion of the clergy the performance of certain duties for which they are duly qualified, and to which they are fully entitled in common with the bishops. It hinders the inferior clergy in the performance of their proper ministerial duties, and degrades them in the estimation of the people.

5. We cannot avoid the conviction that Episcopacy gives play to the bad passions of men.

We have seen what mischief it wrought in the ancient church, and we see not why the same causes, operating upon the heart of man, should not now produce the same results. Is not the human heart still open to pride, to ambition, to lust for power, and love of supremacy? And is there nothing in all these Episcopal orders,—deacon, priest, bishop, archbishop, etc. towering one above another,—is there nothing in all these to excite the bad passions of men? And where so much depends upon patronage and Episcopal favor, is there nothing to destroy a manly independence of the subordinate ranks; creating in them a cringing sycophancy that moves in subserviency to the prelate? Nothing to excite the discontent, the jealousy, or the envy of mortified ambition? Instead of all this right hand and left hand, this going before, and in company, of which Gregory complains, give us rather the simplicity of the gospel order, which knows no such distinctions between the ministers of Christ.

6. We object to the exclusive, intolerant spirit of Episcopacy.

This, to our minds is one of its most obnoxious characteristics. That this single church should assume to be the only true church, and its clergy the only authorized ministers; that the only valid ordinances and sacraments are administered in

their communion; that they alone, of all to whom salvation by grace is so freely published, are received into covenant mercy,—all this appears to us as nothing else than a proud and sanctimonious self-righteousness, which we can only regard with unmingled abhorrence. There is an atrocity of character in this spirit, which can unchurch the saints of God of every age, in every Christian communion, save one, and consign them, if not to perdition, to God's uncovenanted mercy; —in all this there is an atrocity of character, which, in other days, has found, as it seems to us, its just expression in the fires of Smithfield, and in the slow torture of the *auto-da-fe.* Episcopacy holds no fellowship, no communion with us,—*dissenters.* "The Episcopal church, deriving its Episcopal power in regular succession from the holy apostles, through the venerable church of England," makes public declaration, through its bishops, that it has "no ecclesiastical connection with the followers of Luther and Calvin." Be it so. To all this we do not care to object. But we have a right to our own conclusions respecting a religion characterized by such exclusiveness.

We have already learned, from Planck, the able expounder of the constitutional history of the Christian church, the origin of these high-church dogmas in the ancient hierarchy. A profound expositor of the constitutional history of England has also sketched the origin of these high pretensions in the English church. They are of comparatively recent origin, dating back only a few years antecedent to the settlement of the Puritans, in this country. They sprang, also, from the same spirit for which high-church Episcopacy has ever been so much distinguished,—that is, unmitigated hatred of the religion of the Puritans. Bancroft, the chaplain of archbishop Whitgift first broached these doctrines; but archbishop Laud has the credit of re-affirming and establishing them. "Laud and his party, began, about the end of Elizabeth's reign, by preaching the divine right, as it is call-

ed, or absolute indispensability of Episcopacy; a doctrine, of which the first traces, as I apprehend, are found about the end of Elizabeth's reign. They insisted on the necessity of Episcopal succession, regularly derived from the apostles. They drew an inference from this tenet, that ordinations by presbyters were, in all cases, null." Of Lutherans and Calvinists, they began now to speak, "as aliens, to whom they were not at all related, and schismatics, with whom they held no communion; nay, as wanting the very essence of Christian society. This again brought them nearer, by irresistible consequence, to the disciples of Rome, whom, with becoming charity, but against the received creed of the Puritans, and, perhaps, against their own articles, they all acknowledged to be a part of the catholic church."[7]

7. Episcopacy is monarchical and anti-republican.

It is monarchical in form, monarchical in spirit, and, until transplanted to these states, has been, always and everywhere, the handmaid of monarchy. And here it is a mere exotic, which is altogether uncongenial with our own republican soil. Its monarchical tendencies and sympathies are clearly exhibited by Hallam, a historian of extensive, and profound erudition, whose work on the Constitutional History of England, Macaulay characterizes as "the most impartial book that he ever read." "The doctrine of passive obedience, Episcopacy taught in the reign of Elizabeth, even in her homilies. To withstand the Catholics, the reliance of Parliament was upon the 'stern, intrepid, and uncompromising spirit of Puritanism.' Of the conforming churchmen, in general, they might well be doubtful."[8]

The doctrine of the king's absolute authority was inculcated by the Episcopal clergy. "Especially with the high-church party it had become current."[9]

Under Charles I, "they studiously inculcated, that resis-

[7] Hallam's Constitutional History, Vol. I. pp. 540, 541.
[8] Ibid. pp. 262, 263. [9] Ibid. pp. 437, 438.

tance to the commands of rulers was, *in every conceivable instance*, a heinous sin. It was taught in their homilies."[10] "It was laid down in the canons of convocation, 1606."[11]

Sibthorp and Mainwaring, "eager for preferment, which they knew the readiest method to obtain, taught that the king might take the subject's money at pleasure, and that no one might refuse his demand, on penalty of damnation." And for such true and loyal sentiments, Mainwaring was honored with a bishopric by Charles, and Sibthorp with an inferior dignity.

James considered Episcopacy essential to the existence of monarchy, uniformly embodying this sentiment in his favorite aphorism, "No bishop, no king."[12]

Elizabeth and her successors, says Macaulay, "by considering conformity and loyalty as identical, at length made them so."

"Charles himself says in his letters, that he looks on Episcopacy as a stronger support of monarchical power than even an army. From causes which we have already considered, the Established Church had been, since the Reformation, the great bulwark of the prerogative."[13] She was, according to the same eloquent writer, for more than one hundred and fifty years, "the servile handmaid of monarchy, the steady enemy of public liberty. The divine right of kings, and the duty of passively obeying all their commands, were her favorite tenets. She held them firmly, through times of oppression, persecution, and licentiousness; while law was trampled down; while judgment was perverted; while the people were eaten, as though they were bread."[14]

Great objection was made to the introduction of Episcopacy into this country, on account of its monarchical principles

[10] Hallam's Const. Hist. Vol. I. p. 264. [11] Ibid. pp. 567—570.
[12] Neal's History of the Puritans, Vol. II. pp. 43, 44.
[13] Macaulay's Miscellanies, Vol. I. p. 293. Boston ed.
[14] Ibid. p. 249.

and tendencies, so entirely adverse to the popular spirit of our government and our religion. It was received, at last, only on its making large concessions to the spirit of our free institutions. In the revolutionary struggle, great numbers of that denomination, and a larger proportion of their clergy, remained the fast adherents to the British crown. Indeed, the monarchical spirit of Episcopacy, and its uncongeniality with our free institutions, is too obvious to need illustration.[15]

Our fathers came here to establish "a state without king, or nobles, and a church without a bishop." They sought to establish themselves here, as "a people governed by laws of their own making, and by rulers of their own choosing." And here, in peaceful seclusion from the oppression of every dynasty, whether spiritual or temporal, they became an independent and prosperous commonwealth. But what affinity, what sympathy has its government, civil or religious, with that of Episcopacy? the one, republican; the other, monarchical; in sympathy, in principle, in form, they are directly opposed to each other. We doubt not that most of the members of that communion are friends to our republican government; but we must regard their religion as a strange, unseemly anomaly here;—a religious government, arbitrary and despotic, in the midst of the highest political freedom; a spiritual despotism, in the heart of a free republic!

[15] See an extract from Chandler's Appeal on behalf of the church of England in America. N. Y., 1767, cited in Smyth's Eccl. Republicanism, which concedes fully the monarchical spirit of Episcopacy.

CHAPTER XI.

PRAYERS OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

THE religious worship of the primitive Christians was conducted in the same simplicity and freedom which characterized all their ecclesiastical polity. They came together for the worship of God, in the confidence of mutual love, and prayed, and sung, and spoke in the fulness of their hearts. A liturgy and a prescribed form of prayer were alike unknown, and inconsistent with the spirit of their worship.

In the following chapter, it will be my object to establish the following propositions.

I. That the use of forms of prayer is opposed to the spirit of the Christian dispensation.

II. That it is opposed to the example of Christ and of his apostles.

III. That it is unauthorized by the instructions of Christ and the apostles.

IV. That it is contrary to the simplicity and freedom of primitive worship.

V. That it was unknown in the primitive church.

I. The use of forms of prayer is opposed to the spirit of the Christian dispensation.

"The truth," says Christ, "shall make you free." One part of this freedom was exemption from the burdensome rites and formalities of the Jewish religion. "The Lord's

free man" was no longer bound to wear that yoke of bondage; but, according to the perfect law of liberty, James 1: 25. 2: 12, was required only to worship God, in spirit and in truth. Paul often reproved Peter, and others for their needless subjection to the bondage of the Jewish ritual, which imposed unauthorized burdens upon Christians. Gal. 2: 4 seq. 3: 1 seq. 4: 9 seq. Rom. 10: 4 seq. 14: 5, 6. Col. 2: 16—20. Such was the perfect law of liberty which the religion of Christ gave to his followers. It imposed upon them no cumbersome rites; it required no prescribed forms, with the exception of the simple ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. It required only the homage of the heart; the worshipping of God in sincerity and in truth. So taught our Saviour and his apostles.

Indications of irregularity and disorder are, indeed, apparent in some of the churches whom Paul addresses; particularly among the Corinthians. 1 Cor. 14: 1 seq. These irregularities, however, he severely rebukes, assuring them that God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, v. 33; *i. e.*, of harmony in sentiment, and in action, as appears from the context. He ends his rebuke by exhorting them to let all things be done decently, and in order; declaring at the same time, that the things which he writes on this subject, *are the commandments of God.* v. 37. He commends the Colossians, on the other hand, for the good order and propriety which they observed; "joying and beholding their *order*, and the steadfastness of their faith." Col. 2: 5.

The freedom of the gospel was not licentiousness. It gave no countenance to disorder and confusion, in the assemblies of the primitive Christians, convened for the worship of God. But it required them to worship him in spirit and in truth; in a confiding, filial, and affectionate spirit. This is that spirit of adoption which was given them, and which, instead of the timid, cowering spirit of a slave, taught them to come with holy boldness to the throne of grace; and in the trust-

ful confidence of a child, to say "Our Father which art in heaven."

We will not, indeed, assert that the spirit of prayer is incompatible with the use of a prescribed form; but we must feel that the warm and gushing emotions of a pious heart flow not forth in one unvaried channel. Who, in his favored moments of rapt communion, when with unusual fervor of devotion, he draws near to God, and leaning on the bosom of the Father, with all the simplicity of a little child, seeks to give utterance to the prayer of his heart,—who under such circumstances, could breathe to heaven his warm desires through the cold formalities of a prayer-book? When praying in the Holy Ghost, the Spirit itself helping our infirmities, and making intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered, must we, can we, employ any prescribed form of words to express these unutterable things.[1] "Prayer by book," says bishop Wilkins in his Gift of Prayer, "is commonly of itself something *flat and dead;* floating for the most part in generalities, and not particular enough for each several occasion. There is not that life and vigor in it to engage the affections, as when it proceedeth immediately from the soul itself, and is the natural expression of those particulars whereof we are most sensible. It is not easy to express what a vast difference a man may find in respect to inward comfort and satisfaction, between those private prayers that are rendered from the affections, and those prescribed forms that we say by rote or read out of a book." Such a form if not incompatible with such aids of the Spirit, and such promises of his word, must at least be opposed to them. So prayed not our Lord. Such were not the prayers of his disciples. This proposition introduces our second topic of remark.

II. The use of forms of prayer is opposed to the example of Christ and the apostles.

[1] Comp. Bishop Hall, in Porter's Homiletics, p. 294.

Several of our Lord's prayers are left on record, all of which plainly arose out of the occasion on which they were offered, and were strictly *extemporaneous*. So far as his example may be said to bear upon the subject, it is against the use of forms of prayer.

The prayers of the apostles were likewise occasional and *extemporaneous*. Such was the prayer of the disciples at the election of Matthias, Acts 1: 24; of the church at the release of Peter and John, 4: 24—31; of Peter at the raising to life of Tabitha, 9: 40; of the church for the release of Peter under the persecution of Herod; and of Paul at his final interview with the elders of Ephesus, 20: 36; he kneeled down upon the beach, and prayed as the struggling emotions of his heart allowed him utterance.

It is particularly worthy of remark, that in all the examples of prayer in the New Testament, several of which are recorded apparently entire, there is no *similarity of form, or of expression; nor any repetition of a form*, with the single exception of the response, Amen, Peace be with you, etc. Even our Lord's prayer is never repeated on such occasions; nor is there, in all the New Testament, the slightest indications of its use either by the apostles, or by the churches which they established.

The apostles, then, prayed extemporaneously. Their example is in favor of this mode of offering unto God the desires of our soul. Paul often requests the prayers of the churches to whom he writes, in regard to particulars so various, and so minute, as to forbid the supposition that they could have been expressed in a liturgy. The same may be said in regard to his exhortations to prayer, some of which, at least, are generally admitted to have relation particularly to *public prayer*, 1 Tim. 2: 1 seq. Who, on reading these various exhortations, without any previous opinions or partialities, would ever have been directed by all that the apostle has written, to the use of any form of prayer?

Our Lord's prayer, itself, is recorded with variations so great, as to forbid the supposition that it was designed to be used as a prescribed form; as the reader must see by a comparison of the parallel passages in the margin.[2]

So great is the variation in these two forms, that many have supposed they ought to be regarded as two distinct prayers. Such was the opinion of Origen. He notices the different occasions on which the two prayers were offered, and concludes that the resemblance is only such as might be expected from the nature of the subject.[3]

III. The use of forms of prayer is unauthorized by the instructions of Christ and the apostles.

If any instructions to this effect were given by Christ, they

[2] In Matt. 6 : 9—13.

ΠΑΤΕΡ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς· ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου.

Ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου· γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου, ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

Τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον.

Καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφίεμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν.

Καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμὸν, ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

In Luke 11 : 2—4.

ΠΑΤΕΡ,
ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομα σου·
ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου.

Τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δίδου ἡμῖν τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν.

Καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν· καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἀφίεμεν παντὶ ὀφείλοντι ἡμῖν·

καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν.

The doxology is generally supposed to be spurious; but without noticing the omission of this in Luke, the prayers are as various as they might be expected to be, if delivered extemporaneously on two different occasions, without any intention of offering either as a prescribed form of prayer.

[3] *Βελτίον ἢ διαφόρους νομίζεσθαι τὰς προσευχὰς κοινά τινα ἐχούσης μέρη. Περὶ εὐχῆς.*—Vol. I. p. 227.

were in connection with the prayer which he taught his disciples. We have, therefore, to examine somewhat in detail, the nature and design of the Lord's prayer. The views of the learned respecting the nature of our Lord's prayer, and the ends designed by it, are arranged by Augusti under three several classes:

1. Those who maintain that Christ offered no prescribed form of prayer, either for his immediate disciples, or for believers in any age; but that he gave this as an example of the filial and reverential spirit in which we should offer our prayers to God, and of the simplicity and brevity which ought to characterize our supplications, in opposition to the vain repetitions of the heathen, and the ostentatious formalities of the Pharisees. It is worthy of remark, that this was originally given immediately after rebuking such hypocritical devotions. Augustine, A. D. 400, expressly declares, that Christ did not teach his disciples what *words* they should use in prayer; but what *things they should pray for*, when engaged *in silent, mental prayer.*[4]

2. Those who contend that it is a specific and invariable form, to be used by Christians in all ages, like the baptismal formula in Matt. 28: 19, 20; though not to the exclusion of other forms of prayer.

3. Others incline to the opinion, that the prayer is an epitome of the Jewish forms of prayer which were then in use; and that it comprised, in its several parts, the very words with which their prayers began, and which were embodied in one, as a substitute for so many long and unmeaning forms of prayer.

Whatever be the true view of this subject, it is remarkable that our Lord's prayer was not in use in the age of the apostles. Not the remotest allusion to it occurs in the history of

[4] Non enim *verba*, sed *res ipsas* eos verbis docuit, quibus et seipsi commonefacerent a quo, et quid esset orandum cum in penetralibus, ut dictum, est mentis orarent.—*De Magistro*, c. 2. Vol. I. p. 402.

the acts of the apostles, nor in their epistles. It is true, indeed, that the canon of the New Testament was not then established, nor their writings extensively known; but we must suppose that tradition would, at least in some degree, have supplied the place of the gospels. The supposition, that, in all cases of prayer by the disciples and early Christians, the use of this form must be presumed, like that of the baptismal formula, is altogether gratuitous and groundless.

In the apostolical fathers, also, no trace is found of this prayer. Neither Clement, nor Polycarp, nor any father, makes allusion to it, antecedent to Justin Martyr, A. D. 148. And he informs us that in Christian assemblies, the presiding minister offered up prayer and thanksgiving, *as he was able*, ὅση δύναμις ἀντῷ, and that thereupon the people answered Amen! This expression, as we shall endeavor to show in another place, means,—*as well as he could, or to the best of his ability*. It shows that public prayers were not confined to any pre-composed forms. The Lord's prayer may have been used in connection with these extemporary addresses of the minister; but there is no evidence of such a usage. In describing the ceremony of baptism, Justin speaks of the use which is made of "the name of the universal father," τὸ τοῦ Πατρὸς τῶν ὅλων, which is supposed by some to be an allusion to the expression, "our Father which art in heaven."

Lucian, A. D. 180, in his Philopatris, speaks of *the prayer which begins with the Father*, ἐυχὴ ἀπὸ Πατρὸς ἀρξάμενος, which may possibly be a similar allusion to our Lord's prayer.

Nothing much more explicit occurs in Irenaeus. He says, however, "*Christ has taught us to say in prayer, 'And forgive us our debts;'* for he *is our Father, whose debtors we are, having transgressed his precepts.*"[5] This passage only shows his acquaintance with the prayer, but proves nothing in relation to the liturgical use of it. The same

[5] Adv. Haeres. Lib. 5. c. 17.

may be said of Clement of Alexandria, who makes evident allusion to the Lord's prayer in several passages.[6]

The Apostolical Constitutions belong to a later age, and cannot, therefore, be introduced as evidence in the question under consideration.

Tertullian, at the close of the second century and beginning of the third, together with Origen, and Cyprian, who lived a few years later, give more authentic notices of the Lord's prayer.

Tertullian not only quotes the Lord's prayer in various parts of his writings, but he has left a treatise "On Prayer," which consists of an exposition of it, with some remarks appended, concerning the customs observed in prayer. In this treatise, which he is supposed to have written, before he went over to Montanism, *i. e.*, before the year 200, Tertullian represents this prayer, not merely as an exemplar, or pattern of Christian petitions, but as the quintescence and ground of all prayer; and as a summary of the gospel.[7] He strongly recommends, however, other prayers, and enumerates the several parts of prayer, such as supplication, entreaty, confession of sin, and then proceeds to show that we may offer other petitions, according to our accidental circumstances and desires, having premised this legitimate and ordinary prayer which is the foundation of all.[8]

Cyprian, who died A. D. 258, repeats the sentiments of Tertullian, whom he recognizes, to a great extent, as his guide in all points of doctrine. He wrote a treatise on the Lord's prayer, on nearly the same plan as that of Tertullian.

[6] Especially Paedag. Lib. 3.

[7] De Oratione, c. 1. pp. 129, 130.

[8] Quoniam tamen Dominus, prospector humanarum necessitatum, seorsum post traditam orandi disciplinam, "petite," inquit "et accipietis;" et sunt, quae petantur pro circumstantia cujusque, *praemissa legitima et ordinaria, oratione quasi fundamento; accidentium jus est desideriorum jus est superstruendi extrinsecus petitiones.—De Orat.* c. 9.

He has less spirit, but is more full than his predecessor; and often explains his obscurities. Cyprian says, that our Lord among other important precepts and instructions, gave us a form of prayer, and taught us for what we should pray. He also styles the prayer, our public and common prayer;[9] and urges the use of it by considerations drawn from the nature of prayer, without asserting its liturgical authority or established use.

Origen, contemporary with Cyprian, has a treatise on prayer, in the latter part of which, he comments at length upon the Lord's prayer. His remarks are extremely discursive, and chiefly of a moral and practical character; so that we derive no satisfactory information from him respecting the liturgical use of this prayer, or of these prayers rather as he regards them. He, however, warns his readers against *vain repetitions and improper requests*, charging them not *to battologize* in their prayers;—an error which they could have been in no danger of committing, had they been guided by the dictation of a prayer-book. The explanation which he gives implies the use of extemporaneous prayer.[10]

It appears from the foregoing authorities, that our Lord's prayer was never regularly used by the apostles themselves, nor by the churches which they founded, until the close of the second century and beginning of the third. From this time it began to be used, and in the fifth and sixth centuries was a part of the public liturgies of the church.

With reference to the Lord's prayer we subjoin the following remarks.

1. *It is questionable whether the words of this prayer were indited by our Lord himself.* If we adopt the theory of many that it is a compend of the customary prayers in the religious

[9] Inter cetera sua salutaria monita et praecepta divina, . . . etiam orandi ipse formam dedit, . . . publica est nobis et communis oratio.—*De Oratione*, pp. 204—206.

[10] De Oratione, c. 21. p. 230.

service of the Jews, how can it with propriety be affirmed that our Lord gave to his disciples any *form of prayer* whatever as his own?

2. *This appears not to have been given to the disciples as a form of public prayer;* but as a specimen of that spirituality and simplicity, which should appear in their devotions, in opposition to the "vain repetitions of the heathen," and the heartless formalities of the Pharisees. It merely enforces a holy importunity, sincerity and simplicity in *private prayer*. It was a prayer to be offered in secret, as the context in both instances indicates, Matt. 6: 3—14. Luke 11: 1—13.

3. Our Lord expressly enjoined upon his disciples to offer other petitions, of the highest importance, for which no form is given. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are offered to those who shall ask, while yet no prescribed formula is given, in which to make known our requests for this blessing. Why have we not, therefore, the same authority, even from Christ himself, for extemporaneous as for precomposed prayer? At least we must presume that our Lord had no intention of prescribing an exact model of prayer, while at the same time he taught us to pray, without any form, for the highest blessing which we can receive.

4. A strict adherence to this form is incompatible with a suitable recognition of Christ as our mediator and intercessor with the Father. "Hitherto," said our Lord in his last interview with his disciples before he suffered, "ye have asked nothing *in my name.*" But a new and peculiar dispensation was opening to them, by which they might have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." The petitions of that prayer might, indeed, be suitable to the Christian in every age, and in all stages of his spiritual progress; but they are appropriate rather, to those under the law, than to those under grace. They breathe not the peculiar spirit of him who would plead the name of Christ alone, in suing for pardon and acceptance with God.

5. This prayer belongs rather to the economy of the Old than to that of the New Testament. Christ was not yet glorified. The Spirit was not given; neither was the law of ordinances abolished. However useful or important it may have been, in the worship of God under the Old Testament, is it of necessity imposed upon us under that better covenant which God has given; and by which he gives us nearness of access to his throne, without any of the formalities of the ancient Jewish ritual, only requiring us to worship him in spirit and in truth?

6. The variations of phraseology in the forms given by the evangelists, are so great as to forbid the supposition that it is to be regarded as a specific and prescribed form of prayer. The reader has only to notice the two forms of Matthew and Luke, to see that the variations are too numerous and important to justify an adherence to one invariable form of speech. The only form of prayer that can be found in the Scriptures, is recorded on two occasions, with such variations as to exclude the possibility of deriving from either any authorized and unchangeable form. They have that general resemblance, united with circumstantial variations, which might be expected in the prayers of one who was careful only to utter the *same sentiments* without any studied phraseology or set form of words. They are as various as two extemporaneous prayers might be expected to be, if uttered upon two similar occasions with reference to the same subject.[11]

IV. The use of forms of prayer is not congenial with the simplicity and freedom of primitive worship.

All the early records of antiquity relating to the ecclesiastical polity of the primitive Christians, and to their rights of religious worship, concur in the representation, that they were conducted with the utmost simplicity; and in total contrast,

[11] On this whole subject, Comp. Augusti, Denkwürdigkeiten, Vol. V. S. 88—134.

both with the formalities of the ancient Mosaic ritual, and with the various forms of Episcopal worship and government, which were subsequently introduced.[12] The men of those days all accounted themselves the priests of God; and each, according to his ability, claimed the liberty, not only to teach and to exhort, but even to administer the ordinances. All this is explicitly asserted in the commentary upon Eph. 4: 11, which is ascribed to Hilary of Rome, about A. D. 360. "After churches were everywhere established, and ecclesiastical orders settled, the policy pursued was different from that which at first prevailed. *For, at first, all were accustomed to teach and to baptize, each on every day alike, as he had occasion.* Philip sought no particular day or occasion in which to baptize the eunuch, neither did he interpose any season of fasting. Neither did Paul and Silas delay the baptism of the jailor and all his house. Peter had the assistance of no deacons, nor did he seek for any particular day, in which to baptize Cornelius and his household. He did not even administer the baptism himself, but entrusted this duty to *the brethren*, who had come with him from Joppa; as yet there were no *deacons*, save the seven who had been appointed. That the disciples might increase and multiply, all, in the beginning, were permitted to preach, to baptize, and to expound the Scriptures. But when Christianity became widely extended, small assemblies were formed, and rectors and presidents were appointed; and other offices were instituted in the church. No one presumed without ordination to assume the office of the clergy. The writings of the apostles do not, in all respects, accord with the existing state of things in the church; *because these things were written at the time of the first organization of the church.*"[13]

This passage asserts the free and unrestrained liberty which

[12] Comp. Schoene, Geschichtsforschungen, I. S. 91—132.

[13] Comment. ad Eph. 4: 11. Ambros. Opera, Vol. III.

all, at first, enjoyed in instructing and exhorting; and in administering the ordinances and the government of the church.

There is a passage in Tertullian, also, indicative of the same absence of prescribed form and regularity. "After the reading of the Scriptures, psalms are sung, or addresses are made, or prayers are offered."[14] All is unsettled. The exercises are freely varied, according to circumstances. This absence of all established forms, and the universal enjoyment of religious liberty and equality, was, indeed, sometimes misunderstood and abused, as we have seen, even by the churches to whom the apostle writes; and yet it was far from offering any encouragement to the disorders and extravagances of fanaticism. Observe, for example, the following upbraidings of such irregularities by Tertullian: "I must not fail to describe, in this place, the religious deportment of these heretics; how unseemly, how earthly, how carnal; without gravity, without respect, without discipline;—how inconsistent with their religious belief. Especially, it is wholly uncertain who may be a catechumen; who a Christian professor. They all assemble and sit promiscuously as hearers; and pray indiscriminately. How impudent are the women of these heretics, who presume to teach, to dispute, to exorcise, to practise magic arts upon the sick; and, perhaps even to baptize. Their elections to offices in the church are hasty, inconsiderate, and irregular. At one time they elect neophytes; at another, men of the world; and then apostates from us, that they may, at least, gain such by honor, if not by the truth. Nowhere is promotion easier than in the camps of rebels, where one's presence is a sure passport to preferment. Accordingly, one is bishop, to-day; to-morrow, another; to-day, a deacon; to-morrow, a reader; and he who is now a presbyter, to-morrow, will be again a layman."[15]

[14] Jam vero prout Scripturae leguntur, aut psalmi canuntur, aut adlocutiones proferuntur, aut petitiones delegantur.—*De Anima*, c. 9.

[15] De Praescriptionibus Haeret. c. 41.

In relation to this passage, which Neander quotes at length, he offers the following remarks; and we commend them to the attentive consideration of the reader. "We here see the operations of two conflicting parties, one of which regards the original organization of the apostolical churches, as a divine institution, and an abiding ordinance in the church, essential to the spread of a pure Christianity. The other, which contends for an unrestrained freedom in all external matters, opposes these views, as foreign to the freedom and simplicity which the spirit of the gospel encourages. It denies that the kingdom of God, itself inward, unseen, can need any outward organization for the support and spread of that kingdom. It contends that all Christians belong to the priesthood; and this it would practically exemplify, by allowing no established distinction between the clergy and the laity; but permitting all, in common, to teach, and to administer the sacraments;—two parties, which we often see opposed to each other, in the subsequent history of the church. One of them lays great stress upon the outward organization of the visible church, by not suitably distinguishing between what may be a divine institution and what a human ordinance; the other, holds the doctrine of an invisible kingdom; but overlooking the necessities of weak minds, which are incapable of forming conceptions of objects so spiritual, rejects with abhorrence all such ordinances."[16]

V. The use of forms of prayer was unknown in the primitive church.

The apostolical fathers, Clement and Polycarp, give us no information concerning their modes of worship in the age immediately succeeding that of the apostles. The circumstances of their meeting in secresy, and under cover of the latest hours of the night, together with other inconveniences, must, it should seem, be very unfavorable to the use of a liturgy,

[16] Antagonisticus, pp. 340, 341. 1825.

or any form of prayer. Tertullian and Eusebius represent the primitive Christians, of whom Pliny speaks, to have come together, *ad canendum Christo, to sing praise to Christ.*

We are left, then, to the conclusion, that the apostolical churches neither used any forms of prayer, nor is such use authorized by divine authority. In this conclusion we are sustained by various considerations, drawn from the foregoing views of the simplicity of primitive worship.

1. The supposition of a form of prayer is opposed to that simplicity, freedom of speech, and absence of all formalities, which characterized the worship of these early Christians.

In nothing, perhaps, was the worship of the Christian religion more strikingly opposed to that of the Jewish, than in these particulars. The one was encumbered with a burdensome ritual, and celebrated, with many imposing formalities, by a priesthood divinely constituted, whose rank, and grades of office, and duties, were defined with great minuteness, and observed with cautious precision. The other prescribed no ritual; designated no unchanging order of the priesthood; but, simply directing that all things should be done decently and in order, permitted all to join in the worship of God, with unrestrained freedom, simplicity, and singleness of heart. The one, requires the worshipper to come with awful reverence; and, standing afar off, to present his offering to the appointed priest, who, alone, is permitted to bring it near to God. The other, invites the humble worshipper to draw near in the full assurance of faith; and leaning on the bosom of the Father with the confiding spirit of a little child, to utter his whole heart in the ear of parental love and tenderness. Is it not contrary, then, to the economy of this gracious dispensation, to trammel the spirit of this little child with a studied form of speech; to chill the fervor of his soul by the cold dictations of another; and require him to give utterance to the struggling emotions of his heart, in language, to him, uncongenial? Does it comport with the genius of primitive

Christianity, to lay upon the suppliant, in audience with his Father in heaven, the restraints of courtly formalities and the studied proprieties of premeditated prayer? The artlessness and simplicity of primitive worship afford a strong presumption in favor of free, extemporaneous prayer.

2. This presumption is strengthened by the example of Christ and his apostles, all of whose prayers, so far as they are recorded, or the circumstances related under which they were offered, were strictly extemporaneous.

This argument has been already duly considered, and may be dismissed without further expansion in this place.

3. We conclude that no forms of prayer were authorized or required in the apostolical churches, because no instructions to this effect are given either by Christ or the apostles.

The Lord's prayer, as we have already seen, was not a prescribed form of prayer, neither was it in use in the apostolical churches; nor are any intimations given in the New Testament of any form of prayer, prayer-book, or ritual of any kind, unless the response, to which allusion is made in 1 Cor. 14: 16, be considered as such. Here, then, is a clear omission, and manifestly designed to show that God did not purpose to give any instructions respecting the manner in which we are to offer to him our prayers. This argument from the *omissions* of Scripture is presented with great force by Archbishop Whately, in support of the opinion which we here offer, and we shall accordingly adopt his language to express it.

After asserting that the sacred writers were supernaturally withheld from recording some things, he adds: "On no supposition, whatever, can we account for the omission, by all of them, of many points which they do omit, and of their scanty and slight mention of others, except by considering them as withheld by the express design and will (whether *communicated* to each of them or not) of their heavenly Master, restraining them from committing to writing many

things which, naturally, some or other of them, at least, would not have failed so to record.

"We seek in vain there for many things which, humanly speaking, we should have most surely calculated on finding. 'No such thing is to be found in our Scriptures as a Catechism, or regular *elementary introduction* to the Christian religion; neither do they furnish us with anything of the nature of a systematic creed, set of articles, confession of faith, or by whatever other name one may designate a regular, complete compendium of Christian doctrines: *nor again do they supply us with a liturgy for ordinary public worship, or with forms for administering the sacraments, or for conferring holy orders;* nor do they even give any precise *directions* as to these and other ecclesiastical matters;—anything that at all corresponds to a rubric, or set of canons.'

"Now these omissions present a complete moral demonstration that the apostles and their followers must have been *supernaturally withheld* from recording a great part of the institutions, and regulations, which must, in point of fact, have proceeded from them;—withheld, *on purpose* that other churches, in other ages and regions, might not be led to consider themselves bound to adhere to several formularies, customs, and rules, that were of local and temporary appointment; but might be left to their own discretion in matters in which it seemed best to divine wisdom that they should be so left."[17]

4. No form of prayer, liturgy, or ritual, was recorded or preserved by the contemporaries, inspired or uninspired, of the apostles, or by their immediate successors.

This consideration is nearly allied to the former, and is so forcibly urged by Archbishop Whately, that we shall again present the argument in his own words. "It was, indeed, not at all to be expected that the Gospels, the Acts, and those Epistles which have come down to us, should have

[17] Kingdom of Christ, pp. 82, 83.

been, considering the circumstances in which they were written, anything different from what they are: but the question still recurs, why should not the apostles or their followers have also committed to paper, what, we are sure, must have been perpetually in their mouths, regular instructions to catechumens, articles of faith, prayers, and directions as to public worship, and administration of the sacraments? Why did none of them record any of the prayers, of which they must have heard so many from an apostle's mouth, both in the ordinary devotional assemblies, in the administration of the sacraments, and in the 'laying on of hands,' by which they themselves had been ordained?"[18]

The superstitious reverence of the early Christians for such productions as had been obtained from the apostles and their contemporaries, is apparent from the numerous forgeries of epistles, liturgies, etc., which were published under their name. Had any *genuine* liturgies of the apostolical churches been written, it is inconceivable, that they should all have been lost, and such miserable forgeries as those of James, Peter, Andrew, and Mark, have been substituted in their place. Some discovery must have been made of these, among other religious books and sacred things of the Christians, which in times of persecution were diligently sought out and burned. Strict inquiry was made after such; and their sacred books, and sacramental utensils, their cups, lamps, torches, vestments, and other apparatus of the church were often delivered up, and burnt or destroyed. But there is no instance on record, of any form of prayer, liturgy, or book of divine service having been discovered, in the early persecutions of the church. This fact is so extraordinary, that Bingham, who earnestly contends for the use of liturgies from the beginning, is constrained to admit, that they could not have been committed to writing in the early periods of the church, but must have been preserved by oral tradition,

[18] Kingdom of Christ, pp. 252, 253.

and used "*by memory*, and made familiar by known and constant practice."[19] The reader has his alternative, between this supposition, and that of no liturgy or prescribed form of prayer in those days of primitive simplicity. Constantine took special care to have fifty copies of the Bible prepared for the use of the churches, and, by a royal commission, entrusted Eusebius, the historian, with the duty of procuring them.[20] How is it, that the service-book was entirely omitted in this provision for the worship of God? Plainly because they then used none.

5. The earliest fathers, in defending the usages of the church, and deciding controversies, make no appeal to liturgies, but only to *tradition*.

"For these, and other rites of a like character," says Tertullian, in speaking of the ceremonies of baptism and of the Lord's supper, "for these, if you seek the authority of Scripture, you will find none. Tradition is your authority, confirmed by custom and faithfully observed."[21] But these should have a place in a liturgy. Cyprian advocates the mingling of water with wine, at the Lord's supper, by an appeal to tradition, without any reference to the liturgy of James.[22]

Firmilian, his contemporary, admits, that the church at Rome did not strictly observe all things which may have been delivered at the beginning, "so that it was vain even to allege the authority of the apostles."[23]

Basil is even more explicit. After mentioning several things which are practised in the church without scriptural authority, such as the sign of the cross, praying towards the

[19] Antiq. Book 13, c. 5.

[20] Euseb. Vit. Constant. Lib. 4. 36.

[21] Harum et aliarum hujusmodi disciplinarum si legem, expostules scripturarum, nullam invenies. Traditio tibi praetenditur autrix, consuetudo confirmatrix, fides observatrix.—*De Corona Mil.* c. 4.

[22] Ep. ad Caecil. p. 104.

[23] Ep. ad Cyprian, inter Ep. Cyp. 75, p. 144.

east, and the form of invocation in the consecration of the elements, he proceeds to say, "We do not content ourselves with what the apostle or the gospel may have carefully recorded; with these we are not satisfied; but we have much to say before and after the ordinance, derived *from instructions which have never been written*, as having great efficacy in these mysteries." Among these unwritten and unauthorized rites, he enumerates afterwards the consecration of the baptismal water. "From what writings, *ἀπὸ ποίων ἐγγράφων*," he asks, "comes this formulary? They have none; nothing but silent and secret tradition."[24]

From the fact, that the appeal is only to tradition, we conclude, with Du Pin and others, that the apostles neither authorized, nor left behind them any prescribed form of worship or liturgy.

6. That simplicity in worship, which continued for some time after the age of the apostles, forbids the supposition of the use of liturgical forms.

We return now to the second and third centuries, and, from the testimonies, particularly of Justin Martyr and Tertullian, we learn, that the worship of the Christian church, at this period, continued to be conducted in primitive simplicity, without agenda, liturgy or forms of prayer.

Justin Martyr, in his Apology in behalf of the Christian religion, which he presented to the Roman emperor, Antoninus Pius, about A. D. 138, or 139,[25] gives a detailed account of the prevailing mode of celebrating the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper in the Christian church, in which he repeatedly mentions the *prayers* which are offered in these solemnities. "After baptizing the believer, and making him one with us, we conduct him to the brethren, as they are called, where they are assembled, fervently to offer their common supplications for themselves, for him who has been illuminated, and

[24] De Spiritu Sancto, c. 27.

[25] Justin Martyr, by C. Semisch, Vol. I. p. 72. Trans. Ed. 1843.

for all men everywhere; that we may live worthy of the truth which we have learned, and be found to have kept the commandments, so that we may be saved with an everlasting salvation. After prayer, we salute one another with a kiss. After this, bread, and a cup of wine and water are brought to the president, which he takes, and offers up praise and glory to the Father of all things, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and gives thanks that we are accounted worthy of these things. When he has ended the prayers and the thanksgiving, all the people present respond, amen! which, in Hebrew, signifies, *so may it be.*"

The description above given, relates to the celebration of the Lord's supper when baptism was administered. In the following extract, Justin describes the ordinary celebration of the supper on the Lord's day. "On the day called Sunday, we all assemble together, both those who reside in the country, and they who dwell in the city, and the commentaries of the apostles and the writings of the prophets are read as long as time permits. When the reader has ended, the president, in an address, makes an application, and enforces an imitation of the excellent things which have been read. *Then we all stand up together, and offer up our prayers.* After our prayers, as I have said, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president, in like manner, offers prayers and thanksgivings, *according to his ability*, ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ, and the people respond, saying Amen!"[26]

Justin, according to Eusebius,[27] wrote his Apologies at Rome. He was personally acquainted with most of the principal churches in every land. Whether we regard this as descriptive of the usage of the church at Rome, or of the churches generally it is peculiarly gratifying to learn, from a witness so unexceptionable, that the church in his time continued still to worship God in all the simplicity of the prim-

[26] Apol. 1, 61, 65, 67, pp. 71, 82, 83. See above, 168.
[27] Hist. Eccl. Lib. 4. c. 11.

itive disciples. They meet as brethren in Christ; they exchange still the apostolical salutation, the kiss of charity; the Scriptures are read, and the president or pastor makes a familiar address, enforcing the practical duties which have been presented in the reading; a prayer is offered in the consecration of the sacred elements, in which the suppliant prays *according to his ability*, following only the suggestions of his own heart, without any form; after this, they receive the bread and the wine in remembrance of Christ. All is done in the affectionate confidence, the simplicity, and singleness of heart of the primitive disciples.[38]

The testimony of Justin, however, is claimed on both sides. The whole controversy hinges on that vexed passage, ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ. The congregation all stood up, and the president prayed, ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ, *according to his ability*. Some understand by this phrase, that he *prayed with as loud a voice as he could;* the very mention of which interpretation is its sufficient refutation: *cujus mentio est ejus refutatio.* Others translate it, *with all the ardor and fervency of his soul.*

Such are the interpretations of those who contend for the use of a liturgy in the primitive church. On the other hand, Justin is understood to say, that the president prayed *as well as he could*, to the best of his ability, or as Tertullian says, "*ex proprio ingenio.*" If this be the true meaning, it leads to the conclusion that the prayers offered on this occasion were strictly extemporaneous. This is the interpretation, not only of non-conformists generally, but of some churchmen. It is the only fair interpretation of the phrase, according to the *usus loquendi* of this author.

The same expression occurs in other passages of our author, which may serve to illustrate the sense in which he uses this equivocal phrase. "We, who worship the Ruler

[38] Comp. Schoene, Geschichtsforschungen der Kirch. Gebräuche, 1. S. 102, 103.

of the Universe, are not atheists. We affirm, as we are taught, that he has no need of blood, libations and incense. But, with supplication and thanksgivings, we praise him according to our ability, ὅση δύναμις, for all which we enjoy, ἐφ' οἷς προσφερόμεθα πᾶσιν, having learned that, worthily to honor him is, not to consume in fire by sacrifice what he has provided for our sustenance, but to bestow it upon ourselves and upon the needy, to show ourselves thankful to him by invocations and hymns for our birth, our health, and all that he has made; and for the vicissitudes of the season."[29]

The Catholic and Episcopal rendering of this passage makes the author say, that, in *all our sufferings*, ἐφ' οἷς προσφερόμεθα πᾶσιν, we praise him, ὅση δύναμις, with the *utmost fervency of devotion*. This, however, is a mistaken rendering of the verb, προσφέρομαι, which, in the *middle voice* means not to offer in sacrifice, or to worship, but to *participate*, to *enjoy*. So it is rendered by Scapula, Hedericus, Bretschneider, Passow, etc. The passage relates, not to an act of sacrifice, nor of *public worship*, as the connection shows, but to deeds of piety towards God, and of benevolence to men, done according to their ability; by which means they offered the best refutation of the groundless calumnies of their enemies, who had charged them with an atheistical neglect of the gods. The declaration is, that for all their blessings they express, *according to their ability*, thanksgivings to God, and testify their gratitude by deeds of charity to their fellow-men.

"Having, therefore, exhorted you, ὅση δύναμις, *according to our ability*, both by reason, and a visible sign or figure, we know that we shall henceforth be blameless if you do not believe, for *we have done what we could for your conversion*."[30] He had done what he could; by various efforts of argument and exhortation, and by visible signs he had labored according to his ability, to bring them to receive the truth. The exhortation was the free expression of his heart's desire

[29] Apol. 1. c. 13. pp. 50, 51. [30] Apol. 1. c. 55, p. 77.

for their conversion. Can there be any doubt that the phrase denotes the same freedom of expression in prayer? These passages appear to us clearly to illustrate the meaning of the phrase in question as used by our author, and to justify our interpretation.[31]

If one desires further satisfaction on this point, he has only to turn to the works of Origen, in which this and similar forms of expression are continually occurring, to denote the invention, ability, and powers of the mind. Origen in his reply to the calumnies of Celsus, proposes to refute them, "according to his ability."[32] In his preface, he has apologized for the Christians "as well as he could."[33] These Christians sought, "as much as possible," to preserve the purity of the church.[34] They strove to discover the hidden meaning of God's word, "according to the best of their abilities."[35] In these instances the reference is not to the fervor of the spirits, the ardor of the mind, but to the exercise of the mental powers. The act performed is done according to the ingenuity, the talents of the agents in each case.

Basil, in giving instructions how to pray, advises to make choice of scriptural forms of thanksgiving, and when you have praised him thus, *according to your ability*, ὡς δύνασαι, exactly equivalent to *δύναμις*,—then he advises the suppliant to proceed to petitions.[36] The Greeks and the Romans pray

[31] Comp. King, in the author's Antiquities, pp. 213—215. Note.

[32] "Οση δύναμις, Lib. 6. § 1. Vol. I. p. 694, so also, κατὰ τὸ δύνατον, § 12. p. 638.

[33] Κατὰ τὴν παροῦσαν δύναμιν, Praef. Lib. contr. Cel.

[34] "Οση δύναμις, Contr. Cel. Lib. 3. Vol. I. p. 482.

[35] Lib. 6. § 2. p. 630. Comp. also in Comment. in Math. ὅση δύναμις, Tom. 17. Vol. III. p. 809, κατὰ τὸ δύνατον, Tom. 16. Vol. III. p. 735, κατὰ δύναμιν, Tom. 17. Vol. III. p. 779, also Vol. IV. p. 6. κατὰ τὴν παροῦσαν δύναμιν, Tom. 17. Vol. III. p. 794.

Since writing the above, Clarkson's Discourse on Liturgies has fallen under our notice, in which many other passages are given from Justin, Origen, Chrysostom, Basil, etc., all illustrating the same use of the phrase, pp. 68—73, 114—121.

[36] Basil, De Ascet., Vol. II. p. 536.

each in their own language, according to Origen, and each praises God *as he is able.*[37] But enough has been said upon this point, and the reader may safely be left to his own conclusions.

We come next to Tertullian. "We Christians pray with eyes uplifted, with hands outspread, with head uncovered; and, . . *without a monitor, because from the heart.*"[38] Can this be the manner of one praying from a prayer-book? Clarkson has shown, with his usual clearness, that the heathen worshipped by ritual, . . and rehearsed their prayers from a book; and that Tertullian says this to contrast the Christian mode of worship with these heartless forms. These warm-hearted Christians needed no such promptings to give utterance to their devotions. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

Again, "When the sacramental supper is ended, and we have washed our hands, and the candles are lighted, every one is invited to sing unto God, as he is able; either in psalms collected from the Holy Scriptures, or composed by himself, *de proprio ingenio.* And as we began, so we conclude all with prayer."[39]

From Tertullian we have the earliest information respecting the religious ordinances of the churches in Africa. The reader will not fail to notice, that this church also retains still the simplicity of the apostolical churches, mingled with some Roman customs. The brethren form a similar fraternity. Their religious worship opens with prayer, after which the Scriptures are read, and familiar remarks are offered upon them. Then follows the sacramental supper, or more properly the love-feast of the primitive church, which they begin with prayer. After the supper, any one is invited to offer a sa-

[37] ὡς δύναται, Origen, Contra Cels. Lib. 8. c. 37. p. 769.

[38] Illuc sursum suspicientes Christiani manibus expansis, quia innocuis, capite nudo, quia erubescimus; denique sine monitore, quia de pectore oramus.—*Apol.* c. 30.

[39] Apol. c. 39.

cred song, either from the Scriptures, or indited by himself. And the whole ends with prayer. The entire narrative indicates a free, informal mode of worship, as far removed from that which is directed by the agenda and rituals of liturgical worship as can well be conceived.

In the same connection, Tertullian also forcibly illustrates the sincerity and purity of this primitive worship. Speaking of the subjects of their prayers, he says, "These blessings I cannot persuade myself to ask of any but of him, from whom alone I know that I can obtain them. For he only can bestow them. And to me he has covenanted to grant them. For I am his servant and him only do I serve. For this service I stand exposed to death, while I offer to him the noblest and best sacrifice which he requires,—*prayer proceeding from a chaste body, an innocent soul, and a sanctified spirit.*"[40] Beautiful exemplification of the words of our Lord to the woman of Samaria, "Believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in the mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." John 4: 21, 24.

The authority of Tertullian is against the supposition that the primitive churches used forms of prayer. "We pray," says he, "*without a monitor, because from the heart,*" *sine monitore quia de pectore.* Much ingenuity has been employed to reconcile this expression with the use of a prayer-book, but viewed in connection with the freedom and simplicity in which worship was at that time conducted, its real import is sufficiently obvious. He justifies, indeed, the use of the Lord's prayer; but seems to intimate that to God alone belongs the right of prescribing forms of prayer. "God alone," says he, "can teach us how he would be addressed in prayer." But, he adds, "our Lord, who foresaw the necessities of men, after he had delivered this form of prayer, said 'Ask and ye shall receive;' and there are some things which need to be

[40] Apol. c. 30.

asked, *according to every one's circumstances;* the rightful and ordinary being first used as a foundation, we may lawfully add other occasional desires, and make this the basis of other petitions."[41]

From this passage it appears that their manner was, at the beginning of the third century, to repeat the Lord's prayer as the basis and pattern of all appropriate prayer to God, and then to enlarge in free, unpremeditated supplications, according to their circumstances and desires.

There is another circumstance mentioned above by Tertullian, which shows how far the worship of the primitive Christians was at this time from being confined to the prescribed and unvarying formalities of a ritual. It appears that in their social worship each was invited forth to sing praises to God, either from the holy Scriptures, or "*de proprio ingenio*," *of his own composing.* Grant, if you please, that these sacred songs may have been previously composed by each. They are still his own, and have to the hearer all the novelty and variety of a strictly extemporaneous effusion. So he who leads in prayer, like the one who sings his song, may offer a free prayer which he has previously meditated. But in the opinion of many, such songs may have been offered *impromptu*, like the songs of Moses and Miriam, and Deborah, Simeon and Anna. Augustine speaks of such songs, and ascribes to divine inspiration the ability to indite them. The improvisatori of the present age are an example of the extent to which such gifts may be cultivated without any supernatural aid.[42] If, therefore, such freedom was allowed in their psalmody, much more might it be expected in their prayers.

7. The *attitude* of the primitive Christians in prayer is against the supposition that they used a prayer-book. What, according to Tertullian and others, was this attitude? It

[41] De Orat. c. 9.

[42] Comp. Walch. De. Hymn. Eccl. Apost. § 20. Münter, Metr. Offenbar. Pref.

was with arms raised towards heaven, and hands outspread,[43] or, it was kneeling and prostrate, with the eyes closed, to shut out from view every object that might divert the mind from its devotions; or, as Origen expresses it, "*closing the eyes of his senses, but erecting those of his mind.*" Few facts in ancient history are better attested than this. The coins that were struck in honor of Constantine, represented him in the attitude of prayer. But how? not with prayer-book in hand, but, *with hands extended*, and *eyes upturned, as if looking towards heaven*, *ὡς ἄνω βλέπειν δοκεῖν ἀναπεταμένος*.[44]

Now all this, if not absolutely incompatible with the use of a liturgy, must be allowed at least to have been a very inconvenient posture, upon the supposition that a liturgy was employed. Can we suppose that this attitude would have been assumed at the beginning in the use of a cumbersome roll?

8. We have yet to add that the manner in which preconceived prayers began to be used, is decisive against any divine authority for their use. It is an acknowledged historical fact, that in the earliest stages of the Episcopal system, there was no settled and invariable form of prayer. All that was required was, that the prayers should not be unpremeditated, but previously composed and committed to writing. Still they were *occasional*, and may have had all the variety and adaptation of extempore prayers. This fact strikingly exhibits an intermediate state in the transition of the church from that freedom and absence of forms which characterized her earliest and simplest worship, to the imposing formalities of a later date. But it precludes the supposition that an authorized liturgy could have previously existed.[45]

9. If it were necessary to multiply arguments on this

[43] Illuc sursum suspicientes Christiani manibus expansis, etc. Tertul. Apol. c. 30. Comp. De Orat. c. 11. Adv. Marcion, c. 23. Clemens. Alex. Strom. 7.

[44] Euseb. Vit. Const. Lib. c. 15.

[45] Comp. Riddle's Christ. Antiq. p. 370.

point we might mention the secret discipline of the church as evidence against the use of a liturgy. This of itself is regarded by Schöne and others, as conclusive on this subject; a written and prescribed liturgy being quite incompatible with these mysteries. Basil refused to give explanations in writing to Miletus, but referred him to Theophrast for verbal information, that so the mysteries might not be divulged by what he would have occasion to write. "Mysteries," said Origen also, with reference to the same point, "must not be committed to writing." The sacramental prayers and baptismal rites, which should have a place in a liturgy, were among these profound mysteries. How they could have been kept veiled in such mystery, if recorded in a prayer-book, is past our comprehension.

Basil, of the fourth century, informs us that he pronounced the doxology with varied phraseology—that the baptismal formulary was unrecorded, and that the church had not even a written creed or confession.[46] Clarkson has shown by a multitude of citations, that the same is true, of every part of religious worship which a liturgy prescribes. He has also given many instances of occasional prayers, which are inconsistent with the supposition that they were rehearsed from a prayer-book.[47]

Finally, the origin of these ancient liturgies, and the occasion on which they were prepared, is no recommendation of them.

They had their origin in an ignorant and degenerate age. Palmer ascribes the four original liturgies, in which all others have originated, to the *fifth century*. He thinks, however, that some expressions in one, may perhaps be traced to the fourth. The utmost that even the credulity of the Ox-

[46] *Αὐτὴν δὲ ὁμολογίαν τῆς πίστεως εἰς πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν καὶ ἅγιον πνεῦμα ἐκ ποίων γραμμάτων ἔχομεν.—De Spiritu Sancto*, c. 27. p. 57, comp. p. 55.

[47] Discourse on Liturgies.

ford Tractarians pretends to claim in favor of their antiquity, is, that "one, that of Basil, may be traced with tolerable certainty to the fourth century, and three others to the middle of the fifth."[48] Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory, Basil and Chrysostom, those great luminaries of the church, had passed away, and an age of ignorance and superstition had succeeded. Riddle of Oxford, the faithful chronicler of the church, gives the following sketch of the degeneracy of this age,—the close of the fourth century.

"*Superstitious veneration of martyrs* and their relics, credulous reliance upon their reputed powers of intercession, reports of miracles and visions at their tombs, and other follies of this kind, form a prominent feature in the religion of the age.

"*New Festivals during this century.*—Christmas-day, Ascension-day, Whitsunday (in the modern sense).

"*Baptismal Rites, Ceremonies*, etc.—1. Wax tapers in the hands of the candidates; 2. Use of salt, milk, wine, and honey; 3. Baptisteries; 4. Easter and Whitsuntide, times of baptism; 5. Twofold anointing, before and after baptism; 6. Dominica in Albis.

"*The Lord's Supper*, 1. was now commonly called Missa by the Latins; 2. Tables had come into use, and were now called *altars*; 3. *Liturgies used at the celebration of the rite;* 4. Elements still administered in both kinds as before; 5. No private masses.

"*Rapid progress of church oligarchy, and formation of the patriarchate.*"

Again, A. D. 439, "*Christian morality declines.*—Two distinct codes of morals gradually formed, one for perfect Christians, and another for the more common class of believers;—the former consisting of mysticism and ascetic or overstrained virtue,—*the latter in the performance of outward ceremonies and ritual observances.* The distinction itself un-

[48] Tract, No. 63, Vol. I. p. 439.

sound and mischievous; the morality, to a great extent, perverted or fictitious.

"History now records fewer examples of high Christian character than before. Complaints of the fathers, and decrees of councils, lead us to fear that *impiety and disorderly conduct* prevailed within the borders of the church to a melancholy extent. *Superstition makes rapid progress.*"[49]

Out of this age, when nothing was introduced "but corruptions, and the issues thereof; no change made in the current usages, but for the worse; no motions from its primitive posture, but downwards into degeneracy;"—out of this age, proceeded the first liturgy, the offspring of ignorance and superstition!

The clergy had become notoriously ignorant and corrupt, unable suitably to guide the devotions of public worship; and, to assist them in their ignorance and incompetence, liturgies were provided for their use.[50] "When, in process of time, the distinguished fathers of the church had passed away, and others, of an inferior standing, arose in their places with less learning and talents for public speaking,—as barbarism and ignorance continued to overspread the Roman empire, and after the secret mysteries of Christianity had been done away, or, at least, had assumed another form of manifestation,—then, the clergy, not being competent themselves to conduct the exercises of religious worship to the edification of the people, saw the necessity of providing themselves with written formulas for their assistance. For this purpose, men were readily found to indite and transcribe them. In this manner,

[49] Riddle's Chronology, A. D. 400, A. D. 439.

[50] The reader will find abundant evidence of this ignorance, in the councils of this age, and in Blondell, Apologia Hieron., pp. 500, 501, Clarkson, Discourse on Liturgies, pp. 191—197, and Witsius, Exercitat. De Oratione, § 30, 31, p. 85. In the council of Ephesus, in the fifth century, Elias signs his name by the hand of another, *because he could not write his name: eo quod nesciam literas.* So, also, Cajumas: *propterea quod literas ignorem.*

arose its formularies, which are known under the name of liturgies and missals, and which afterwards, in order to give greater authority to them, were ascribed to distinguished men, and even to the apostles themselves, as their authors."[51]

Now we seriously ask, Shall superstition, ignorance, and barbarism, rather than God's own word, teach us how we may most acceptably worship him? Shall we forsake the example of Christ and the apostles, to imitate ignorant men, who first made use of a liturgy, because they were unable, without it, decently to conduct the worship of God?

How forcibly does the formality of such liturgical services contrast with the simplicity and moral efficacy of primitive worship? Christianity ascends the throne, and, in connection with the secular power, gives laws to the state. The government has a monarch at its head; and the church, bishops in close alliance with him. The simple rites of religion, impressive and touching by their simplicity, have given place to an imposing and princely parade in religious worship. Splendid churches are erected. The clergy are decked out with gorgeous vestments, assisted by a numerous train of attendants, and proceed in the worship of God with all the formalities of a prescribed and complicated ritual. Age after age these liturgical forms continue to increase with the superstition and degeneracy of the church, until her service becomes encumbered with an inconceivable mass of missals, breviaries, rituals, pontificals, graduals, antiphonals, psalteries, etc., alike unintelligible and unmeaning.

But the simplicity of primitive Christianity gives it power. It has no cumbersome rites to embarrass the truth of God. Nothing to dazzle the eye, to amuse and occupy the mind that is feeling after God, if haply it may find him. All its solemn, simple rites are in harmony with the simplicity of that system of gospel truth, which is at once the wisdom of

[51] Geschichtsforschungen, der Kirch. Gebräuche, II. S. 120, 121.

God and the power of God, in the conversion of men. They present an easy and natural medium for the communication of religious truth to the soul, and lay the mind open to its quickening power, without the parade of outward forms to hinder its secret influences upon the mind.

REMARKS.

1. To the people of the congregation forms of prayer are inappropriate.

There is an intimacy in all our joys, our sorrows, and our trials; an intimacy and identity which makes them peculiarly our own; so that they find not a just expression in the language of another. The language may be more select, more appropriate, in the estimation of another who knows not our hearts, but it is not our own, and but poorly expresses our emotions and desires. How variable withal, is this infinite play of the passions in the heart; and how preposterous the attempt to give utterance to them in one unvarying tone! As if the harp of David were always strung to the same key and sounded one unchanging note! First, stereotype the mind and heart of man, and then is he prepared to express his devotions in the unvarying letter of a liturgy.

Amid all the ills that man is heir to, new and unforeseen calamities are ever and anon met with, which would naturally bring men to the throne of grace with supplications and entreaties of a special character. Shall we wait now until notice is given to the diocesan in the distant metropolis, and a prayer returned at last duly prepared for the occasion? But before it comes, that occasion may have gone by, and given place to something else for which the bishop's form is altogether inappropriate.

2. Liturgical forms become wearisome by constant repetition.

The love of change is inherent in the breast of man. We must have variety. Without it, even our refined pleasures lose their charm in a little and dead monotony. So a liturgy, however excellent in diction, or noble in sentiment, loses its interest by perpetual repetition. The continual recurrence even of the best possible form, that of the Lord's prayer, injures its effect upon our own mind. We have heard it the most in our daily meals; at morning and evening prayer, and in some instances it has been the only prayer offered in our hearing on such occasions; at funerals, at marriages, at baptism, at confirmation, at the sacrament of the Lord's supper; and in every public service, not once merely, but twice or thrice, and even more than this; as if no religious act could be rightly done, without the introduction somewhere of the Lord's prayer. Such ceaseless repetition only creates a weariness of spirit, in which one earnestly craves a freer and more informal mode of worship. Let the following testimony suffice for illustration. "How often have I been grieved to observe coldness and comparative indifference in the *reading-desk*, but warmth and animation in the pulpit! In how many different places have I been obliged to conclude, this man preaches in earnest, but prays with indifference! I have asked myself, I have asked others, what is the reason of such conduct."[a] The case so embarrassing to our churchman is easily explained. In the reading-desk, the Episcopal preacher utters the cold dictations of another; in the pulpit he expresses the warm suggestions of his own heart. Here, accordingly, his utterance is instinct with life and spirit; there it is changed by perpetual repetition into chilling indifference.

3. The significancy of a liturgy is lost by its constant repetition.

To one who but seldom frequents an Episcopal house of worship, there may be much that is impres-

[a] Churchman, in Christian Observer,

But the impression, we apprehend, must be greatly diminished by a constant attendance. The words of the prayer-book, when grown familiar, lose in a great degree, their significancy. They fall upon the ear like the murmur of the distant waterfall, lulling the mind to repose, or leaving it to the undisturbed enjoyment of its idle musings. The listless inattention of men to the reading of the Scriptures, is a subject of public and painful notoriety; and the reason assigned is, that, by long familiarity and constant repetition, the words even of the great Jehovah fall upon the ear without making any adequate impression on the mind. The same result, in a much higher degree, may be expected from the constant recital of the liturgy. It may be a form of sound words; but it becomes in time no more than a form of words, received passively and without producing the requisite impression. "This same service, now repeated for the thousandth, the ten thousandth time—which has stood printed before the eye ever since it could trace a line, which no moment of personal or public excitement ever warmed or can warm into a higher flight,—this same weary monotony for youth and age—this eternal dead letter loses much of its power by long practice, and dwells often in the memory after it has ceased to touch the heart."

4. A liturgy is often not in harmony with the subject of discourse.

The preceding remarks relate to the disadvantages of the liturgy to the people; the present, and some that follow, have reference to the inconvenience experienced by the clergyman from the same source. Every preacher knows the importance of harmony in his services. And if permitted, in the freedom of primitive worship, to direct them accordingly, he studiously seeks to make the impression from the prayers, the psalmody, and the reading of the Scriptures, coincident with the subject of his sermon; so that all may conspire to produce a single impression upon the hearer. The final result

upon the audience is ascribable in a great degree to the harmony which pervades the entire service. But here the liturgy interposes its unyielding forms, to break up this harmony of the service, and sadly to impair the effect of it upon the audience.

5. The liturgy is not a suitable preparation for the impression of the sermon.

Much of the practical *effect* of the preacher's discourse depends upon the previous preparation of the mind for it. This preparation results, in a great degree, from a happy adaptation of the preliminary services to this end. But the preliminaries of the liturgy move on with unvarying formality, carrying the mind, it may be, directly away from the subject of the discourse that is to follow, or leaving the audience uninterested and unprepared for any quickened impression from the preacher. He rises to address them, with the disheartening conviction that they are in no state rightly to receive what he has to say, he advances in his discourse, under the consciousness that he is toiling at a task that is too heavy for him; and retires at last with the feeling that he has only labored in vain, and spent his strength for nought. So in the event, it appears; all has been done with cold and decent formality, but the profiting of the hearer is not apparent. How much of the inefficacy of the pulpit in the Episcopal church is ascribable to this cause, we leave the reader to judge.

6. A liturgy curtails unreasonably the time allotted to the sermon.

A sermon we know may be, and often is, too long; it may also be too short. Following the protracted recitals of the liturgy, it is necessarily crowded into a narrow space, at the conclusion of a service which has already unfitted the audience for a calm, sustained attention to the preacher. What he has to say, must be quickly said; he therefore hurries through a brief and superficial exposition of his subject, and dismisses

it with a hasty application, before it has had time to assume in the hearer's mind that importance which belongs to its momentous truths. And the final result is that it falls powerless upon the consciences of the audience.

7. The liturgy exalts the inventions of man above the truth of God.

The liturgy is ever prominently before the audience; claiming the first attention, the highest place in all the acts of worship. In some liturgies the reading of the Scriptures forms no part of the public service, and in others, the word of God is mixed up with a mass of foreign ingredients which do but neutralize its power. The tendency of the whole arrangement is to keep back the word of God, to hold in check its power, to rob religious truth of its chief glory as the means of salvation, and to substitute in its place a system of mere formalism.

In this connection, the profound remarks of Archbishop Whately, respecting undue reliance on human authority, are worthy of serious consideration. He exposes with great force the disposition of men, to "obtrude into the place of Scripture, creeds, catechisms, and liturgies, and other such compositions, set forth by any church." This disposition he ascribes to deep seated principles of our nature. He supposes that nothing but a miraculous providence could have so directed the apostles and primitive Christians, that they left no such formulary of religious worship, or compend of the Christian faith. "Such a systematic course of instruction, carrying with it divine authority, would have superseded the framing of any *others*—nay, would have made even the alteration of a single word, of what would on this supposition have been Scripture, appear an impious presumption. . . . So that there would have been an almost inevitable danger, that such an authoritative list of credenda would have been regarded, by a large proportion of Christians, with a blind, unthinking reverence, which would have exerted no influence on the charac-

ter. They would have had a form of godliness: but, denying the power thereof, the form itself would have remained with them only the corpse of departed religion."[*]

Ought we not then this momentous consideration to excite a wise jealousy of a tendency, which may so easily be abused! In our mind, it is an urgent reason for confining the ceremonials of religion within the strictest limits. But this continual *recital of creeds* and confessions, this perpetual profession *of faith in the* "holy catholic church," these rites of the ritual *ever recurring*, and foremost in importance, to which every thing else gives place in public worship,—who can doubt the practical influence of all this? It casts into shade and distance God's own word. It brings forward the dictations of canonized tradition as the rule of faith and of worship; and spiritual truth is forgotten in this parading of the ceremonials of religion.

N. The book of Common Prayer dishonors the holy sabbath.

We have sought in vain for any clear expression of the divine authority of the Lord's day. It is specified in the calendar among many other holy days of the church, some of which seem to be regarded with equal reverence. The specifications respecting it, all serve to direct the mind to it as merely an ordinance of the church. They bring it down from its holy place as a divine institution, and blend it unworthily with a multitude of saints' days, which a blind superstition first established and still venerates. When the true doctrine of the sacred sabbath was first promulgated, it encountered for half a century the furious opposition of the established church on this very principle, that it was derogatory to the authority of the church, and to the reverence due to its festivals and fasts. The advocates of this doctrine were suspended from their ministerial duties, deposed and imprisoned for daring to assert, that this holy sabbath depended on higher au-

[*] Dewes of Romanism, pp. 60—61.

thority than the usage and decrees of the church. Whatever may be the sentiments of Episcopalians at present respecting this day, we cannot resist the conviction, that it has in the prayer-book no higher place than the other holy days of the church.

9. We object to the popish origin and tendencies of the English liturgy.

It is a translation and compend of the popish ritual, and still savors too strongly of its origin. We hear, indeed, so much of this "excellent," "this noble and pathetic liturgy," that it seems almost like sacrilege to touch that holy thing with other sentiments than those of profound veneration. But we dislike its origin, and the character which it inherits. Must we, in this nineteenth century, go back to the dark ages of popery, and learn from her traditions, her superstitions, how we may best worship God in spirit and in truth? But this "pathetic litany," "this noble liturgy," it is said,—"is it not admirable?" To which we must still reply,

Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes![84]

Let us examine a little. What change has the liturgy undergone, in passing over from the Romish to the English church, and what is the difference between the religion of the two churches. The chief points of distinction, according to Hallam, are the following:

1. The liturgy was translated into the vernacular language of the people. Formerly, it had been in an unknown tongue.

2. Its acts of idolatrous worship to saints and images were expunged.

3. Auricular confession was done away; or rather it was left to every man's discretion, and went into neglect.

4. "The doctrine of transubstantiation, or the change, at the moment of consecration, of the substances of bread and wine into those of Christ's body and blood," was discarded.

[84] I dred the Greeks; yea, when they offer gyftes.—*Howard's Trans.*

5. The celibacy of the clergy was abolished.[55]

With these modifications the religion of Rome became that of the church of England. And to this day, her ritual, crudely formed in the infancy of protestanism, which Milton denominates "an extract of the mass translated," continues with little variation to be the liturgy of the whole Episcopal church in England and America. Like the ancient liturgies, it was prepared for a priesthood who were too ignorant to conduct religious worship with decency without it. Even the book of homilies was drawn up at the same time, "to supply the defect of preaching, which few of the clergy at that time were capable of performing."[56]

Multitudes in the kingdom were strongly attached still to the Roman Catholic religion. It was a politic measure to conciliate these as far as possible. For various reasons, the Reformers sought to make a *gradual*, rather than an abrupt departure from popery. The liturgy accordingly had then, and still retains many popish affinities. These are seen in the canonizing of saints, and celebration of saint's days; in the absolution by the priests, modified so as to unite the Protestant idea of forgiveness of sin by God alone, with the popish absolution by the priest; in the endless reiterations of the Lord's prayer; in the inordinate prominence that is given to liturgical forms; in the qualified and cautious phraseology of the communion service, and the special care that *all the consecrated bread and wine* shall be eaten and drunk, so that none of it shall be carried out of the church,—a point upon which the papists are ridiculously superstitious.[57] These

[55] Constitutional History, Vol. I. pp. 116—126.

[56] Neal's History of Puritans, 1. p. 90. Hetherington's History of Westminster Divines, p. 21.

[57] In the amendment of the liturgy, under Elizabeth, "the words used in distributing the elements, were so contrived as neither to offend the Popish, or Lutheran, or Zuinglian communicant."—*Hallam's Const. Hist.* Vol. 1. p. 150 note. Very catholic and accommodating, surely!

popish tenets are seen particularly in the baptismal regeneration of the liturgy, by which the child becomes "regenerate, and grafted into the body of Christ's church. . . . We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own child by adoption." The order of confirmation is so conducted as to confirm one in the delusion, that he has become "regenerate by water, and the Holy Ghost," *through the instrumentality of this rite*, rather than by that grace which is the gift of God. The burial service, also, is exceedingly objectionable. "Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God, of his great mercy, to take *unto himself* the soul of our deceased brother here departed, we therefore commit his body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, *in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life* through our Lord Jesus Christ." This is said of every one alike, however profligate his life, however hopeless his death. In the American service, instead of this, at the grave is said or sung, "I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, 'Write, from henceforth blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; even so, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labors.'" Rev. 14: 13. The practical influence of this service is apparent from the following remark of Archbishop Whately. "I have known a person, in speaking of a deceased neighbor, whose character had been irreligious and profligate, remark, how great a comfort it was to hear the words of the funeral service read over her, 'because, poor woman, she had been such a bad liver.'"[58]

Without controversy, a temporizing policy guided the early Reformers in the preparation of the English prayer-book. However many of the Episcopal church may repudiate the semi-popish delusion of Puseyism, which has come up over the length and breadth of our land, it is indirectly

[58] Errors of Romanism, p. 55.

supported, if not plainly taught, in her ritual. The English reformers attempted a sinful compromise with the corruptions of the church of Rome. In the language of Macaulay, "The scheme was merely to rob the Babylonian enchantress of her ornaments; to transfer the full cup of her sorceries to other hands, spilling as little as possible by the way. The Catholic doctrines and rites were to be retained in the church of England."[59]

The great effort of a large party in this church at present is to reinstate these popish doctrines and rites—an effort which Roman Catholics regard with the deepest interest. The celebrated Dr. Wiseman expresses, in the liveliest terms, his gratification at "the movement" of the Oxford Tractarians "towards Catholic ideas and Catholic feelings." He has "watched its progress with growing interest," because he "saw in it the *surest guarantee* and *principle of success*. The course which we (papists) ought to pursue seems simple and clear,—*to admire* and *bless*, and, at the same time, to *second* and *favor*, as far as human means can, the *course* which God's providence has opened, and is pursuing; but *to be careful how we thwart it*. It seems to me impossible to read the works of the Oxford divines, and especially to follow them chronologically without discovering a daily approach towards our holy church, both in doctrine and affectionate feeling. Our saints, our popes, our rites and ceremonies, offices, nay, our very rubrics are precious in their eyes, far alas beyond what many of us consider them."[60]

[59] Review of Hallam's Constitutional History. See in the Appendix a further illustration of this.

[60] Cited in Rev. H. H. Beamish's Letter to Dr. Pusey, p. 9.

CHAPTER XII.

PSALMODY OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

The singing of spiritual songs constituted, from the beginning, an interesting and important part of religious worship in the primitive church. The course of our remarks on this subject will lead us to consider,

I. The argument for Christian psalmody as a part of religious worship.

II. The mode of singing, in the ancient church.

III. The changes in the psalmody of the church.

I. Argument for the psalmody of the primitive church.

1. From reason.

Praise is the appropriate language of devotion. A fervent spirit of devotion instinctively seeks to express itself in song. In the strains of poetry, joined with the melody of music, it finds an easy and natural utterance of its elevated emotions. Can it be doubted, then, that that Spirit which was shed abroad upon the disciples after our Lord's ascension, would direct them to the continued use of the sacred psalmody of their own Scriptures, indited by the inspiration of the same Spirit? Is it unreasonable to suppose, that the glad spirit with which they continued praising God, might direct them to indite other spiritual songs to the praise of their Lord, whose wondrous life and death so employed their contemplations, and whose love so inspired their hearts?

The opinion has been expressed by Grotius, and is supported by many others, that we have, in Acts 4 : 24—30, an epitome of such an early Christian hymn to Christ.[1]

2. From analogy.

The singing of songs constituted a great part of the religious worship of all ancient nations. In all their religious festivals, and in their temples, those pagan nations sung to the praise of their idol gods.[2] The worship of the Jews, not only in the temple, but in their synagogues and in their private dwellings, was celebrated with sacred hymns to God. Many of the loftiest, sweetest strains of Hebrew poetry were sung by their sacred minstrels on such occasions. Christ, himself, in his final interview with his disciples, before his crucifixion, sung with them the customary paschal songs, at the institution of the sacrament;[3] and, by his example, sanctified the use of sacred songs in the Christian church. All analogy drawn from other forms of religious worship, pagan and Jewish, requires us to ascribe to the primitive Christians the use of spiritual songs in their public devotions.

3. From Scripture.

The same is clearly indicated in the writings of the New Testament.

Without doubt, in the opinion of Münter,[4] the gift of the

[1] Comp. Augusti, Denkwürdigkeiten, Vol. V. 248.

[2] Semper id est cordi musis, semperque poetis
Ut divos celebrent, laudes celebrentque virorum
Ὑμνεῖν ἀθανάτους, ὑμνεῖν ἀγαθῶν κλέα ἀνδρῶν.
Theocritus, cited by Gerbert, Musica Sacra, T. 1. Pref. Comp. 61. § 5, in which are many references of a similar kind.

[3] The collect for such occasions is comprised in Psalms 113—118, the first two before the paschal supper, and the remainder after it. The theory has been advanced, but without reason, that Christ himself indited the hymn on this occasion. Neither is it necessary to suppose that all the hymns above-mentioned were sung by him and the disciples at this time.

[4] Com. Münter, Metrisch. Uebersetz. der Offenbar. Johann. Vorrede, S. 17.

Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was accompanied with poetic inspiration, to which the disciples gave utterance in the rhapsodies of spiritual songs. Acts 2: 4, 13, 47. The opinion of Grotius and others, with reference to Acts 4: 24—30, has already been mentioned. But there are other passages which clearly indicate the use of religious songs in the worship of God. Paul and Silas, lacerated by the cruel scourging which they had received, and in close confinement in the inner prison, prayed and sang praises to God at midnight. Acts 16: 25. The use of psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, moreover, is directly enjoined upon the churches, by the apostle, as an essential part of religious devotions. Col. 3: 16. Eph. 5: 19. The latter epistle was a circular letter to the Gentile churches of Asia;[5] and, therefore, in connection with that to the church at Colosse, is explicit authority for the use of Christian psalmody in the religious worship of the apostolical churches.[6]

The use of such psalmody, evidently, was not restricted merely to the *public* worship of God. In connection with the passage from Ephesians, the apostle warns those whom he addresses against the use of wine, and the excesses to which it leads, with evident reference to those abuses which dishonored their sacramental supper and love-feasts. In opposition to the vain songs which, in such excesses, they might be disposed to sing, they are urged to the sober, religious use of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

The phraseology, therefore, indicates that they were not restricted to the use of the psalms of David merely, as in the Jewish worship; but were at liberty to employ others of appropriate religious character in their devotions. It seems also that the Corinthians were accustomed to make use of songs composed for the occasion. 1 Cor. 14: 26. And

[5] Neander's Apost. Kirch. I. 450, 3d ed.

[6] All this is shown at length by J. G. Walch, De Hymnis Ecclesiae Apostolicae.

though the apostle had occasion to correct their disorderly proceedings, it does not appear that he forbade the use of such songs. On the contrary, there is the highest probability that the apostolical churches did not restrict themselves simply to the use of the Jewish Psalter. And the evidence is sufficiently clear, that the primitive churches very early employed, in their devotions, not merely the *psalms*, appropriately so called, but hymns and spiritual songs indited for the worship of the Christian church.

Grotius and others have supposed that some fragments of these early hymns are contained, not only as above-mentioned, in Acts, but perhaps, also, in 1 Tim. 3: 16. Something like poetic antithesis they have imagined to be contained in 1 Tim. 1: 1. 2 Tim. 2: 11—13. The expression in Revelation, "I am Alpha and Omega; the first and the last," has been ascribed to the same origin, as has also Rev. 4: 8, together with the song of Moses and the Lamb, Rev. 15: 3, and the songs of the elders and the beasts, Rev. 5 : 9—14. Certain parts of the book itself have been supposed to be strictly poetical, and may have been used as such in Christian worship, such as Rev. 1: 4—8. 11: 15—19. 15: 3, 4. 21: 1—8. 22: 10—18. But the argument is not conclusive; and all the learned criticism, the talent, and the taste that have been employed on this point, leave us little else than uncertain conjecture on which to build an hypothesis.

4. From history.

The earliest authentic record on this subject is the celebrated letter from Pliny to Trajan, just at the close of the apostolical age, A. D. 103, 104. In the investigations which he instituted against the Christians of his period, he discovered, among other things, that they were accustomed to meet before day, to offer praise to Christ as God, or as *a* God, as some contend that it should be rendered.[7] The expression

[7] Carmen Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem.—*Epist.* Lib. 10. 97.

is somewhat equivocal, and might be used with reference to the ascription of praise in prayer, or in song. But it appears that these Christians rehearsed their *carmen invicem, alternately*, as if in responsive songs, according to the ancient custom of singing in the Jewish worship. Tertullian, only a century later, evidently understood the passage to be descriptive of this mode of worshipping God and Christ, for he says that Pliny intended to express nothing else than assemblies before the dawn of the morning, for singing praise to Christ and to God, *coetus antelucanos, ad canendum Christo et Deo.*[8] Eusebius also gives the passage a similar interpretation, saying, that Pliny could find nothing against them save that, arising at the dawn of the morning, they sang hymns to Christ as God, *Πλὴν τό γε ἅμα τῇ ἕω διεγειρομένους τὸν Χριστὸν Θεοῦ δίκην ὑμνεῖν.*[9] Viewed in this light, according to the most approved interpretation of the passage, it becomes evidence of the use of Christian psalmody among the Christians immediately subsequent to the age of the apostles.[10] Tertullian himself also distinctly testifies to the use of songs to the praise of God, by the primitive Christians. Every one, he says, was invited in their public worship to sing unto God, according to his ability, either from the Scriptures, or *de proprio ingenio, one indited by himself*, according to the interpretation of Münter. Whatever may be the meaning of this phrase, the passage clearly asserts the use of Christian psalmody in their religious worship. Again, he speaks of singing, in connection with the reading of the Scriptures, exhortations, and prayer in public worship.[11] Eusebius also speaks of singing in a similar manner.[12]

Justin Martyr also mentions the songs and hymns of the Ephesian Christians. "We manifest our gratitude to him by worshipping him in spiritual songs and hymns, praising

[8] Apolog. c. 2.
[9] Eccl. Hist. Lib. 3. 32.
[10] Münter, Metrisch. Offenbar. S. 25.
[11] De Anima, c. 9.
[12] Vit. Const. Lib. 4. c. 45.

him for our birth, for our health, for the vicissitudes of the seasons, and for the hopes of immortality."[13]

The testimony of Origen, † A. D. 254, again, of the church of Alexandria, is to the same effect. In answer to the charge of Celsus, that the Christians worshipped the great God, and sang hymns also to the sun and to Minerva, he says, "we know the contrary, for these hymns are to him who alone is called God over all, and to his only begotten [Son]."[14]

Eusebius also has left on record the important testimony of Caius, as is generally supposed, an ancient historian, and contemporary of Tertullian. "Who knows not the writings of Irenaeus, Melito, and others, which exhibit Christ as God and man? And how many songs and odes of the brethren there are, written from the beginning, *jam pridem, a long time since*, by believers, which offer praise to Christ as the Word of God, ascribing divinity to him."[15] This passage not only presents a new and independent testimony to the use of spiritual songs in the Christian church, from the remotest antiquity, *ἀπ' ἀρχῆς*, to the praise of Christ as divine, but it shows that these, in great numbers, had been committed to writing, as it appears, for continued use. So that we here have evidence of the existence of a Christian hymn-book from the beginning.

Christ, the only-begotten of the Father, is the burden of these primitive songs and hymns. Here is he set forth *doc-*

[13] Apol. c. 13. Justin Martyr wrote, as is supposed, also a work on Christian Psalmody, the loss of which we have deeply to deplore. Living within half a century of the age of the apostles it would be particularly interesting to receive from him a treatise on this interesting subject. The references are from Semisch, Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 4. c. 18. and Phot. Bibl. Cod. Vol. 1. p. 95. *ὁ ἐπιγραφόμενος ψάλτης*. Comp. Fabric. Bibliothec. Graec. ed Harl. VII. p. 67.

[14] Against Celsum, Lib. 8. c. 67. p. 792, ed. Ruaei: *ὕμνους γὰρ εἰς μόνον τὸν ἐπὶ πᾶσι λεγόμενον Θεὸν, καὶ τὸν μονογενῆ αὐτοῦ.*

[15] *Ψαλμοὶ δὲ ὅσοι καὶ ᾠδαὶ ἀδελφῶν ἀπαρχῆς ὑπὸ πιστῶν γραφεῖσαι, τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸν Χριστὸν ὑμνοῦσι θεολογοῦντες.—Eccl. Hist.* Lib. 5. 28.

trinally, θεολογικώς, as the incarnate Word of God, as God and man. His mediatorial character was the subject of the songs of these apostolical and primitive saints. This sacred theme inspired the earliest anthems of the Christian church; and, as it has ever been the subject of her sweetest melodies and loftiest strains, so doubtless will it continue to be, until the last of her ransomed sons shall end the songs of the redeemed on earth, and wake his harp to nobler, sweeter strains in heaven.[16]

One ancient hymn of the primitive church appears to have come down to us entire, from that distant period. It is found, indeed, in the Paedagoge of Clement of Alexandria, a work bearing date some hundred and fifty years from the time of the apostles; but it is ascribed to another, and assigned to an earlier origin. It is wanting in some of the manuscripts of Clement. It contains figurative language and forms of expression which were familiar to the church at an earlier date; and, for various reasons, is regarded by Münter and Bull,[17] as a venerable relic of the early church, which has escaped the ravages of time, and still remains, a solitary remnant of the Christian psalmody of that early age. However this may be, it is certainly very ancient, and the earliest that has been preserved and transmitted to us. It is a hymn to Christ; and, though regarded merely as a poetical production it has little claim to consideration, it shows what

[16] Whatever may be the doctrinal truth in regard to the character of Christ, it is abundantly evident, that he was worshipped as divine in the prayers and psalmody of the primitive church. See the author's Christian Antiquities, pp. 203—206. This truth, again, is confirmed by the fact mentioned by Neander, that, "In the controversy with the Unitarians, at the close of the second and beginning of the third century, their opponents appealed to those hymns in which, aforetime, Christ had been worshipped as God."—*Allgem. Kirch. Hist.*, I. 523, 2d ed.

[17] Metrisch. Offenbar., S. 32. Bull's Defensio fidei Nicaenae, § 111. c. 2. p. 316, cited by Münter.

was the strain of their devotions. We see in it the heart of primitive piety laboring to give utterance to its emotions of wonder, love and gratitude, in view of the offices and character of the great Redeemer.[18] It is not found in the later collects of the church, because, as is supposed, it was thought to resemble, in its measure and antiphonal structure, the songs which were used in pagan worship.

The songs of the primitive Christians were not restricted to their public devotions. In their social circles, and around their domestic altars, they worshipped God in the sacred song; and, in their daily occupations, they were wont to relieve their toil and refresh their spirits, by renewing their favorite songs of Zion. Persecuted and afflicted as they often were, —in solitary cells of the prison, in the more dismal abodes of the mines to which they were doomed, or as wandering exiles in foreign countries,—still they forgot not to sing the Lord's song in the prison or the mine, or in the strange lands to which they were driven.[19]

II. Mode of singing in the ancient church.

Both the Jews in their temple service, and the Greeks in their idol worship, were accustomed to sing with the accompaniment of instrumental music. The converts to Christianity accordingly must have been familiar with this mode of singing. The word, ψαλλεῖν, which the apostle uses in Eph. 5: 19, is supposed by critics to indicate that they sang with

[18] The reader will find this hymn in the author's Christian Antiquities, pp. 226, 227. It is an anapaestic ode, with occasional interchanges of spondees and dactyls, which this measure admits. It is supposed also to consist of parts which may have been sung in responses. The divisions are as follows,—lines, 1—10, 11—28, 29—45, 46—63.

[19] Comp. Jamieson, cited in Christian Antiquities, p. 375. It would not be difficult to adduce original authorities to this effect, but we must confine ourselves more particularly to the devotional psalmody of their public worship.

such accompaniments. The same is supposed by some intimated by the golden harps which John, in the Apocalypse, put into the hands of the four-and-twenty elders. But it is generally admitted, that the primitive Christians employed no instrumental music in their religious worship. Neither Ambrose, nor Basil, nor Chrysostom,[20] in the noble encomiums which they severally pronounce upon music, make any mention of instrumental music. Basil condemns it as ministering only to the depraved passions of men.[21]

It seems from the epistle of Pliny, that the Christians of whom he speaks, sang *alternately, in responses.* The ancient hymn from Clement above-mentioned, seems to be constructed with reference to this method of singing. There is, also, an ancient but groundless tradition extant in Socrates,[22] that Ignatius was the first to introduce this style of music in the church at Antioch. It was familiar to the Jews, who often sang responsively in the worship of the temple. In some instances, the same style of singing may have been practised in the primitive church. But responsive singing is generally allowed not to have been in common use during the first three hundred years of the Christian era. This mode of singing was common in the theatres and temples of the Gentiles, and for this reason was generally discarded by the primitive Christians.[23] It was first practised in the Syrian churches; it was introduced into the Eastern churches by Flavian and Diodorus, in the middle of the fourth century;[24] from them it was transferred by Ambrose, A. D. 370, to those of the West, and

[20] Ambrose, in Ps. 1. Praef. p. 740. Basil, in Ps. 1. Vol. II. p. 713. Chrysostom, in Ps. 41. Vol. V. p. 131.

[21] Hom. 4. Vol. I. p. 33.

[22] Eccl. Hist. Lib. 6. c. 8.

[23] Theodorus Mopsues. quoted by Nicetas Momin. Thesaur. orthodox, Lib. 5. c. 30. in Biblioth. Vet. Pat. XXV. p. 161.—*Augusti, Denkwürdigkeiten*, Vol. V. 278.

[24] Theodoret, Eccl. Hist. Lib. 2. c. 19. p. 622.

it soon came into general use in these churches, under the name of the Ambrosian style of music.[25]

Sacred music must, at this time, have consisted only of a few simple airs which could easily be learned, and which by frequent repetition, became familiar to all. An ornamented and complicated style of music would have been alike incompatible with the circumstances of these Christian worshippers, and uncongenial with the simplicity of their primitive forms.[26]

In their songs of Zion, both old and young, men and women, bore a part. Their psalmody was the joint act of the whole assembly in unison. Such is the testimony of Hilary, A. D. 355.[27] Ambrose remarks, that the injunction of the apostle, forbidding women to speak in public, relates not to singing, "for this is delightful in every age and suited to every sex."[28] The authority of Chrysostom is also to the same effect. "It was the ancient custom, as it still is with us, for all to come together, and unitedly to join in singing. The young and the old, rich and poor, male and female, bond and free, all join in one song. . . . All worldly distinctions here cease, and the whole congregation form one general chorus."[29]

This interesting part of their religious worship was conducted in the same simplicity which characterized all their proceedings. All unitedly sang their familiar psalms and hymns; each was invited, at pleasure, and according to his ability to lead their devotions in a sacred song indited by himself. Such, evidently, was the custom in the Corinthian

[25] August. Confess. 9. c. 7. Paulini, Vet. Ambros. p. 4. Comp Augusti, Denkwürdig. V. 1. p. 300.

[26] Augusti, Denkwürdigkeiten, Vol. V. p. 288.

[27] Comment. in Ps. 65. p. 174.

[28] In Ps. 1. Praef. 741. Comp. Hexaemeron, Lib. 3. c. 5. p. 42.

[29] Hom. 11. Vol. XII. p. 349. Hom. 36 in 1 Cor. Vol. X. p. 340. Comp. Gerbert, Musica Sacra, Lib. 1. § 11, who has collected many other authorities to the same effect.

church. Such was still the custom in the age of Tertullian, to which reference has already been made. Augustine also refers to the same usage, and ascribes to divine inspiration[30] the talent which they manifested in this extemporaneous psalmody.

Such, so far as we are informed, was the psalmody of the early church. It consisted in part of the psalms of David, and in part of hymns composed for the purpose, and expressive of love and praise to God and to Christ.[31] Few in number, and sung in rude and simple airs, they yet had wonderful power over those primitive saints. The sacred song inspired their devotions both in the public and private worship of God. At their family board it quickened their gratitude to God, who gave them their daily bread. It enlivened their domestic and social intercourse; it relieved the weariness of their daily labor; it cheered them in solitude, comforted them in affliction and supported them under persecution. "Go where you will," says Jerome, "the ploughman at his plough sings his joyful hallelujahs, the busy mower regales himself with his psalms, and the vine-dresser is singing one of the songs of David. Such are our songs,—our love songs, as they are called—the solace of the shepherd in his solitude, and of the husbandman in his toil."[32] Fearless of reproach, of persecution, and of death, they continued, in the face of their enemies, to sing their sacred songs in the streets and market-places, and at the martyr's stake. Eusebius declares himself an eye-witness to the fact, that under their persecutions in Thebais, "they continued to their latest breath to sing psalms and hymns, and thanksgivings to the God of heaven."[33] And the same is related of many others among the early martyrs.

[30] Cited by Münter, Metrisch. Offenbar. The sentiments of Grotius also are to the same effect.

[31] Neander, Allgem. Kirch. Hist. I. S. 523, 2d ed.

[32] Ep. 17. ad Marcellam. Cited in Arnold's Abbildung, S. 174.

[33] Eccl. Hist. 8. c. 9.

We are informed by Chrysostom, that it was an ancient custom to sing the 140th psalm every evening; and that the Christians continued through life the constant singing of this psalm.[34] The song of Zion was a sacred fountain, which, like living waters in a desert, sustained in this barren wilderness the growth and vigor of primitive piety, and overspread with perpetual verdure the vineyard of the Lord. On this point the sentiments of Herder are peculiarly interesting; and no one can speak with more authority respecting the psalmody of the ancient church. Speaking of the earliest hymns of the Latin church, after remarking that they exhibit little poetic talent or classic taste, he adds, "But who can deny their influence and power over the soul? These sacred hymns of many hundred years' standing, and yet at every repetition still new and unimpaired in interest—what a blessing have they been to poor human nature! They go with the solitary into his cell, and attend the afflicted in distress, in want, and to the grave. While singing these, one forgets his toil, and his fainting, sorrowful spirit soars in heavenly joys to another world. Back to earth he comes to labor, to toil, to suffer in silence and to conquer. How rich the boon, how great the power of these hymns."[35] He proceeds to say, that there is in these an efficacy and power which lighter songs, which philosophy itself can never have; a power which is not ascribable to anything new or striking in sentiment, or powerful in expression. And then raises the question, "whence then have they this mighty power?

[34] Chrysost. in Ps. 140. Tom. 5. p. 427.

[35] Augustine gives the following account of the power of this music over him on the occasion of his baptism. "Oh how freely was I made to weep by these hymns and spiritual songs; transported by the voices of the congregation sweetly singing. The melody of their voices filled my ear, and divine truth was poured into my heart. Then burned the sacred flame of devotion in my soul, and gushing tears flowed from my eyes, as well they might."—*Confess.* Lib. 9. c. 9. p. 118.

what is it that so moves us?" To which he replies, *simplicity and truth.* "Embodying the great and simple truths of religion, they speak the sentiment of a universal creed—they are the expression of one heart and one faith. The greater part are suitable to be sung on all occasions, and daily to be repeated. Others are adapted to certain festivals; and as these return in endless succession, so the sacred song perpetually repeats the Christian faith. Though rude, and void of refined taste, they all speak to the heart; and, by ceaseless repetition, sink deep the impress of truth. Like these, the sacred song should ever be the simple offering of nature, an incense of sweet odors, perpetually recurring, with a fragrance that suffers no abatement."[36] Such is the simple power of truth wrought into the soul by the hallowed devotions of the sanctuary. Striking the deepest principles of our nature, stirring the strongest passions of the heart, and mingling with our most tender recollections and dearest hopes, is it strange that the simple truths and rude air of the sacred song should deeply move us? So presented, they only grow in interest by continued repetition. And in the lapse of years, these time-hallowed associations do but sink the deeper in the soul:

> "Time but the impression stronger makes,
> As streams their channels deeper wear."

III. Changes in the psalmody of the church.

In the course of a few centuries from the fourth onward several variations were introduced in the mode of performing this part of public worship, the effect of which was to withdraw the people from any direct participation in it, and to destroy in a great degree its moral power.

1. The first of these changes has been already mentioned, singing alternately by responses. This was introduced into

[36] Briefe zur Beförderung der Humanität. 7. Samml. S. 28 sq. Cited by Augusti, Denkwürdigkeiten, Vol. V. S. 296, 297.

the Syriac churches, afterwards into the Eastern church, and finally, into the Western, by Ambrose. In this the congregation still bore some part, all uniting in the chorus, and singing the responses.

2. The appointment of *singers* as a distinct class of officers in the church, for this part of religious worship, marks another alteration in the psalmody of the church. These were first appointed in the fourth century. But the people continued, for a century or more, to enjoy their ancient privilege of all singing together.

3. Various restrictions were from time to time laid upon the use of hymns *of human composition*, in distinction from the inspired psalms of David. Heretics of every name had their sacred hymns, suited to their own religious belief, which had great effect in propagating their errors. To resist their encroachments, the established church was driven to the necessity, either of cultivating and improving its own psalmody, or of opposing its authority to stay the progress of this evil. The former was the expedient of Ambrose, Hilary, Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, Augustine, etc. But the other alternative in turn was also attempted. The churches by ecclesiastical authority were restricted to the use of the Psalter and other canonical songs of the Scriptures. All hymns of merely human composition were prohibited, as of a dangerous tendency and unsuitable to the purposes of public worship. The synod of Laodicea, A. D. 344—346, c. 59, passed a decree to that effect. The decree was not, however, fully enforced. But this and similar efforts on the part of the clergy, had the effect to discourage the use of such religious songs. The Arians of that age also opposed these ancient sacred hymns, for a different reason, and cultivated a higher style of sacred music.

4. The introduction of instrumental music. The tendency of this was *to secularize* the music of the church, and to encourage singing by a choir. Such musical accompani-

ments were gradually introduced; but they can hardly be assigned to a period earlier than the fifth and sixth centuries. Organs were unknown in church until the eighth or ninth century. Previous to this they had their place in the theatre, rather than in the church. They were never regarded with favor in the Eastern church, and were vehemently opposed in many places in the West. In Scotland no organ is allowed, to this day, except in a few Episcopal churches. "In the English convocation, held A. D. 1562, in queen Elizabeth's time, for settling of the liturgy, the retaining of organs was carried only *by a casting vote.*"

5. The introduction of *profane, secular music into the church* was one of the principal means of corrupting the psalmody of the church. An artificial, theatrical style of music, having no affinity to the worship of God, began to take the place of those solemn airs which before had inspired the devotions of His people. The music of the theatre was transferred to the church; which, accordingly, became the scene of theatrical pomp and display, rather than the house of prayer and of praise, to inspire, by its appropriate and solemn rites, the spiritual worship of God. The consequences of indulging this depraved taste for secular music in the church are exhibited by Neander in the following extract. "We have to regret, that both in the Eastern and the Western church, their sacred music had already assumed an artificial and theatrical character, and was so far removed from its original simplicity, that even in the fourth century, the abbot Pambo of Egypt complained that heathen melodies, [accompanied as it seems with the action of the hands and the feet,] had been introduced into their church psalmody."[37] Isidorus of Pelusium, also complained of the theatrical singing, especially of the women, which, instead of inducing penitence for sin, tended

[37] *Μελῳδοῦσιν ᾄσματα καὶ ῥυθμίζουσιν ἠχοῦς σείουσι χεῖρας καὶ μεταβαίνουσι (βάλλουσι?) πόδας.*—Scriptores Ecclesiastici, De Musica, T. 1. 1784. p. 3.

much more to awaken sinful desires.[38] Jerome, also, in remarking upon Eph. 5: 19, says, "May all hear it whose business it is to sing in the church. Not with the voice, but with the *heart*, we sing praises to God. Not like the comedians should they raise their sweet and liquid notes to entertain the assembly with theatrical songs and melodies in the church; but the fear of God, piety, and the knowledge of the Scriptures, should inspire our songs. Then would not the voice of the singers, but the utterance of the divine word, expel the evil spirit from those who like Saul are possessed with it. But instead of this, that same spirit is invited rather to the possession of those who have converted the house of God into a pagan theatre."[39]

The assembly continued to bear some part in the psalmody of the church, even after this had become a cultivated theatrical art, for the practice of which, *the singers* were appointed, and trained as a distinct order in the church. The congregation may have continued for a time to join in the chorus or in responses. But is it conceivable that a promiscuous assembly could unite in such theatrical music as is here the subject of complaint? Was not music, executed in this manner, an art which must require in its performers a degree of skill altogether superior to that which all the members of a congregation could be expected to possess?

6. The practice of sacred music, as an ornamental, cultivated art, took it yet more completely from the people. It became an art which only a few could learn. The many, instead of uniting their hearts and their voices in the songs of Zion, could only sit coldly by as spectators. A promiscuous assembly, very obviously, could not be expected to bear a prominent part in such theatrical music as is here the subject of consideration. They might, indeed, unite in some

[38] Isidor. Pelus. C. 1. Ep. 90. Biblioth. Vet. Pat. Vol. VII. p. 543.
[39] Comment. in Ep. Eph. Lib. 3. c. 5. T. 4. p. 387. ed. Martianay. Cited in Allgem. Kirch. Gesch. II. S. 681, 2d ed.

simple chorus, and are generally understood not to have been entirely excluded from all participation in the psalmody of the church until the sixth or seventh century. Gregory the Great was instrumental in bringing singing schools into repute, and after him Charlemagne. Organs came about this time into use. But in the early periods of the Christian church, instrumental music was not in use in religious worship.

7. The clergy eventually claimed the right of performing the sacred music as a privilege *exclusively their own*. This expedient shut out the people from any participation in this delightful part of public worship.

Finally, the more effectually to exclude the people, the singing was in Latin. Where that was not the vernacular tongue, this rule was of necessity an effectual bar to the participation of the people in this part of public worship. Besides, the doctrine was industriously propagated that the Latin was the appropriate language of devotion, which became not the profane lips of the laity, in these religious solemnities; but only those of the clergy, who had been consecrated to the service of the sanctuary. The Reformation again restored to the people their ancient and inestimable right. But in the Roman Catholic church, it is still divided between the chants of the priests and the theatrical performances of the choir, which effectually pervert the devotional ends of sacred music.

REMARKS.

1. To accomplish, in the happiest manner, the devotional ends of sacred music, the congregation should unitedly join in it.

In advancing an opinion so much opposed to the taste of the age, the writer has no expectation that it will be received with the consideration which, in his opinion, its importance

demands. For he cannot resist the conviction, that in separating the congregation generally from a participation in this delightful part of public worship, we have taken the most effectual measure, as did the Catholic clergy in the period which has passed under review, to destroy the *devotional* influence of sacred music. What, may we ask, was the secret of the magic charm of sacred music, in the early Christian church? Whence its mighty influence over those primitive saints? It was, that the great truths of religion were embodied in their psalmody, and set to such simple airs that all could blend their voices and their hearts in the sacred song; and, though they may have exhibited little of what is denominated musical taste, or of the symphonies of a modern oratorio, they offered unto God the melody of the heart, by far the noblest praise. Their sacred songs became, as we have seen, the *ballads* of the people,[40] sung at all times, and upon every occasion. Religious truth became inwrought into the very soul of these Christians by their sacred songs. It entered, not only into their public devotions, but into their family worship, their domestic pleasures, and their social entertainments. Thus religious truth addressed itself to the hearts of the people in a manner the most persuasive possible. It became associated, both with the most endearing recollections of the heart, and its most hallowed associations. Will the music of our churches, however skilfully played upon the organ, or sweetly sung by a few select voices, ever so move the heart, and mould the character of the whole society? No; like the cold corruscations of the Northern lights, it does but amuse and delight the spectator for a while, and then passes away, leaving the bosom dark and cheerless as before. But when the music of the church is let down from the orchestra to the congregation below,

[40] One has wisely said, "Let me make the ballads of the people, and I care not who makes their laws." But connected with religion their power is immensely increased.

and runs with its quickening influence, from man to man, until all feel their soul ascending in the song which they unitedly raise to God, then it is that the

> "Heart grows warm with holy fire,
> And kindles with a pure desire."

No one can witness the worship of the churches in Germany, without being struck with the devotional influence of their psalmody. They are a nation of singers. Rarely is one seen in the church, whether old or young, who does not join in the song;[41] and with an evident interest which it has not been the good fortune of the writer often to witness, or to experience in the churches of America. In our country this subject is encompassed with intrinsic difficulties which we pass without remark. But were it possible ever to make the modification under consideration in our church-music, even at the expense of the musical skill and talent which are now displayed, we must believe that much would be gained to the devotional influence of our sacred music. What

[41] The singing is the most devotional part of the religious worship of the Lutheran and Evangelical churches of Germany, and in proportion to the other parts of worship is extended to an inordinate length. For example, on one occasion in the ordinary services of the Sabbath, the singing before sermon was observed, by the writer, to occupy *fifty minutes*. In the course of this time, two prayers were offered, neither of which occupied the space of *three minutes*, and two portions of Scripture were read, which did not occupy more than five minutes. All the prayers, including the litany, did not exceed ten minutes in length; while the singing employed near an hour. The prayers are liturgical forms to a great extent, briefly rehearsed at different times by the clergyman, in which the congregation seem not to be deeply interested. The singing is the act of the congregation unitedly, with which they are never weary, with which, I had almost said, they never appear to be satisfied. And yet the hymns in common use have but very humble claims to consideration for the poetic taste which they display. In this respect they would hardly equal the antiquated collect of Tate and Brady. With the Divine Songs of Watts, and with our lyric poetry generally, they bear no comparison.

though, in humbler strains, and more simple airs, the churches raise to God their sacred songs of praise? What if some discordant notes occasionally disturb the harmony of the music? if still they do but fulfil the apostolical injunction, singing and making melody in their *hearts* to the Lord, the noblest, the best, the only true end, of sacred music is accomplished. Such are the strains which He who inspires the songs of heaven delights most to hear:

> "Compared with these, Italian trills are tame;
> The tickled ears no heart-felt raptures raise."

2. Christian psalmody was one of the principal means of promoting the devotions of the primitive church.

Enough remains on record in relation to this subject, to show what interest these venerable saints and martyrs had in their sacred songs. Enough, to show what power their psalmody possessed to confirm their faith, to inspire their devotions, to bring them nigh to God, and to arm them with more than mortal courage for the fiery conflict to which they were summoned in defence of their faith. Has this most interesting and important part of religious worship its just influence with us? Is its quickening power shed abroad over our assemblies, like the spirit of heavenly grace, warming the cold heart into spiritual life, and reviving its languid affections, as if with a fresh anointing from on high?

3. Christian psalmody affords the happiest means of enforcing the doctrinal truths of religion.

Reason with man, and you do but address his understanding; you gain, it may be, his cold convictions. Embody the truth in a creed, or confession of faith; to this he may also yield assent, and remain as unmoved as before. But express it in the sacred song. Let it mingle with his devotions in the sanctuary, and in the family; let his most endeared associations cluster around it, as the central point, not only of his faith, but of his hopes, his joys; and what before was a spec-

ulative belief, has become his living sentiment,—the governing principle both of the understanding and the heart. The single book of psalms and hymns, therefore, does unspeakably more to form the doctrinal sentiments of men, than all the formularies, creeds, and confessions of polemics and divines. "The one," says Augusti, "is chiefly for the minister; the other is in the hands of the people, and is, as you may say, his *daily creed.*"[42] The heart, in religion, as in everything else, governs the understanding. The sacred song that wins the one, fails not also to convince and to control the other. With great propriety, therefore, has the hymn-book long been styled, the *Layman's Bible.*[43]

Every religious denomination, accordingly, has its hymn-book; and in ancient times the same was true of every religious sect. The spiritual songs of the primitive Christians were almost exclusively of a doctrinal character. "In fact, almost all the prayers, doxologies, and hymns of the ancient church are nothing else than prayers and supplications to the triune God, or to Jesus Christ. They were generally altogether doctrinal. The prayers and psalms, of merely a moral character, which the modern church has in great abundance, in the ancient, were altogether unknown."[44] And yet modern Christians have not been inattentive to this mode of defending their faith. Their different collections of psalms and hymns abound with those that are expressive merely of

[42] Denkwürdigkeiten, V. S. 411.

[43] Augusti, Denkwürdigkeiten, V. S. 411; also, 277. Augustine recognizes the same sentiment, as follows:—Cum reminiscor lachrymas meas quas fudi ad cantus ecclesiae tuae in primordiis recuperatae fidei meae, et nunc ipso quod moveor, non cantu, sed rebus quae cantantur, cum liquida voce et convenientissima modulatione cantantur, magnam instituti hujus utilitatem rursus agnosco. Tamen cum mihi accidit ut me amplius *cantus* quam res quae canitur moveat, poenaliter me peccare confiteor, et tunc mallem non audire cantantem. —*Confess.* L. 10. c. 33. Vol. 1. p. 141.

[44] Augusti, Denkwürdigkeiten, Vol. V. p. 417.

points of doctrine, at the expense, often, of all poetical imagery or expression.[45]

4. Christian psalmody is one of the most efficient means of promulgating a religious system among a people.

This was one of the earliest and most successful expedients for spreading the ancient heresies of the church. Bardasanes, the famous Syrian Gnostic, in the latter part of the second century, made this the principal means of propagating his sentiments. He composed songs expressive of the tenets which he would inculcate, and adapted them to music, to be sung by the people. His son, Harmonius, followed the example of his father; and such, according to Augusti, "was the influence of their efforts, that the Syrian church was well nigh overrun with their errors."[46] And not only the Gnostics, but the Manicheans, the Donatists, and almost every heretical sect, employed, with surprising success, the same means of promulgating their tenets. Taught by their example, the orthodox finally sought, in the same manner, to resist the progress of their errors. Such were the efforts of Ephraem the Syrian, Hilary, Augustine, and others.[47]

Luther well understood this method of propagating truth and refuting error, and employed it with a skilful hand.

[45] For example, the successive stanzas of one of the hymns in the Lutheran collection, begin, each, with one of the terms at the beginning of the creed. 1. I believe in God the Father, etc. 2. I believe in God the Son, etc. 3. I believe in God the Holy Ghost, etc.

[46] Composuit carmina et ea modulationibus aptabit, finxit psalmos induxitque metra, et mensuris ponderibusque distribuit voces. Ita propinavit simplicibus venenum dulcedine temperatum; aegroti quippe cibum recusabant salubrem. Davidem imitatus est, ut ejus pulchritudine ornaretur ejusque similitudine commendaretur. Centum et quinquaginta composuit hic quoque psalmos. Ephraem Syrus, in Hymn 53, p. 553. Comp. Sozomen, h. e. 3. c. 16. Theodor. Lib. 4. c. 29; also, 1. c. 22.—*Denkwürdigkeiten*, Vol. V. S. 272, 273.

[47] Augusti, Denkwürdigkeiten, Vol. V. S. 275, 276, 414, 415. For further information on this point, see J. Andr. Schmidt. De modo propagandi religionem per carmina. Helmst. 1720. 4to.

For his great work he possessed remarkable qualifications, which are seldom united in one man. Among his varied accomplishments, not the least important were his poetical and musical talents. He was taught music with the first rudiments of his native language; and when, as a wandering minstrel, he earned his daily bread by exercising his musical powers, in singing before the doors of the rich, in the streets of Magdeburg and Eisenach, he was as truly preparing for the future Reformer, as when, a retired monk in the cloister at Erfurt, he was storing his mind with the truths of revelation, with which to refute the errors and expose the delusions of papacy. One of his earliest efforts at reform was the publication of a psalm-book, A. D. 1524, composed and set to music chiefly by himself.[48] The songs of Luther confirmed the Christian's faith and soothed the sufferings of the martyr at the stake. One of his earliest hymns he consecrated to commemorate the martyrs of Brussels; and the whole reformed church felt the sustaining influence of this single song which we give in the margin.[49]

[48] This psalm-book is usually ascribed to Luther, though it bears not his name. It contained eight psalms, of which, however, but one bears his name. But he published in 1525, two editions, the first containing sixteen, and the other forty. In the collection of sacred music in use by the Lutheran churches in Germany, consisting of two hundred and fifty-three tunes, *twenty-five* are ascribed to Luther, either as the author of them, or as having been revised by him, and adapted to the use of the church. The authorship of a few is doubtful, though they are assigned to that age.

[49] Flung on the heedless winds
Or on the waters cast,
Their ashes shall be watched
And gathered at the last.
And from that scattered dust,
Around us and abroad
Shall spring a plenteous seed
Of witnesses for God.

Jesus hath now received
Their latest living breath,—

His associate Hans Sach coöperated with him by publishing in 1523, the "*Nightingale of Wittemberg.*" His efforts at an earlier period at Nuremberg had according to D'Aubigné, great influence in promoting the work of the Reformation. "From a humble workshop situated at one of the gates of the imperial city of Nuremberg proceeded sounds that resounded through all Germany preparing the minds of men for a new era, and everywhere endearing to the people the great revolution that was then in progress. The spiritual songs of Hans Sachs, his Bible in verse powerfully assisted this work. It would, perhaps, be difficult to say to which it was most indebted, the Prince, Elector of Saxony administrator of the empire, or the shoemaker of Nuremberg!"

The psalms of the church, in the time of the Reformation, were wholly of a doctrinal character. "Hymns merely inculcating moral truths, which are so abundant in modern collections, were unknown at this early period. As now, in symbols and catechisms, we have an abstract of the Christian faith, so then, was the substance of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith embodied in their divine songs."[50] Weapons so simple were employed with surprising effect by the great Reformer. Even his enemies acknowledged their hated power. "These hymns, many of which are manufactured in Luther's own laboratory, and sung in the vernacular tongue of the people,—it is wonderful what power they have in propagating the doctrines of Luther! Some of them doctrinal in their character, others imitating devotional psalms, they repeat and blazon abroad the faults

> Yet vain is Satan's boast
> Of victory in their death.
> Still—still—though dead they speak,
> And trumpet tongued proclaim
> To many a wakening land,
> The one availing name.
>
> *Cited from D'Aubigné.*

[50] Augusti, Denkwürdigkeiten, Vol. V. S. 287.

of the church, whether real or imaginary."[51] Such is the mighty power of sacred psalmody in propagating the Christian faith:

> "These weapons of our holy war,
> Of what almighty force they are!"

Have our missionaries employed, with due diligence and skill, this mode of warfare, and applied these weapons with sufficient success to the assault upon the strongholds of Satan?

5. Is not the influence of sacred music too much overlooked as a means of *moral discipline*, in our efforts to educate the young, and to reform the vicious?

[51] Cantilenae vernaculo idiomate, quarum plurimae ex ipsius Lutheri officina sunt profectae, mirum est, quam promoveant rem Lutheranam. Quaedam dogmaticae, aliae aemulantur psalmos pios;—recitant exagitantque Christianorum vitia sive vera, sive ficta. *Thomas de Jesu*, (Didacus Davila) *Thesaur. sapient. divinae*, T. 2. p. 541. Luther inserted in the title-page of his hymn-book, published at Wittenberg, in 1543, the following stanza:

> "Viel falscher Meister jetzt Lieder dichten,
> Siehe dich für, und lern' sie recht richten.
> Wo Gott hin bauet sein' Kirch' und sein Wort,
> Da will der Teufel seyn mit Trug und Mord."
> *Augusti*, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, Vol. V. S. 287.

The influence of congregational singing in England at an early period in the reformation is noticed by bishop Jewel. "A change now appears visible among the people; which nothing promotes more than inviting them to sing psalms. This was begun in one church in London, and did quickly spread itself, not only through the city, but in neighboring places. Sometimes at Paul's Cross there will be six thousand singing together." By the Act of Uniformity, 1548, the practice of using any psalm openly "in churches, chapels, oratorios and other places" was authorized. At length, after being popular for a while in France and Germany, among both Roman Catholics and Protestants, as psalmody came to be discountenanced by the former as an open declaration of Lutheranism, so, in England, psalm-singing was soon abandoned to the Puritans, and became almost a peculiarity of Nonconformity."—*Conder's View of all Religions*, p. 321. Note.

Has it the place which its great importance demands in our primary schools and higher seminaries of learning? In Germany the child is universally taught to sing in the primary school. Singing is as much a part of the instruction in these schools as arithmetic or grammar. This is one of the blessings which they owe to their great reformer. "Next to theology," said Luther, "it is to *Music* that I give the highest place, and the greatest honor.[52] A schoolmaster ought to know how to sing; without this qualification I would have nothing to do with him." Can a more amiable provision be made for the future happiness of the child than to train his heart and ear for the delights of music by teaching his infant lips to sing the praises of his God and Saviour?

In our admirable system of prison discipline, has it its proper place among the reforming influences which are employed to quicken the conscience of the hardened transgressor, and turn him from the error of his ways?[53] Has the power of sacred music been sufficiently employed to restore the insane? We know the magic power of David's harp to tame the ferocious and frenzied spirit of Saul; will not the same means have a similar effect, to soothe and to tranquilize the poor maniac's bewildered soul, and to restore him to his right mind? We submit these inquiries respectfully to the careful consideration of the reader, and leave the subject for the discussion of abler pens.

Finally. This subject suggests the importance of simplicity in church psalmody.

Let our sacred songs be simple in their poetry. Such is

[52] Ich gebe nach der Theologia, der Musica den nähesten Locum und höchste Ehre. Opp. W. 22. S. 2253.—*Cited by D'Aubigné.*

[53] "I always keep these little rogues singing at their work," said a distinguished overseer of an institution for juvenile offenders, in Berlin, "I always keep them singing, for while the children sing, the devil cannot come among them at all; he can only sit out doors there and growl; but if they stop singing, in comes the devil."—*Prof. Stowe, on Com. Schools*, p. 26.

the poetry of nature, of devotion, of the Scriptures. If we would have the songs of Zion come from the heart, the offspring of pure and deep emotion, if we would have them stir the souls of the whole assembly for heart-felt, sympathetic worship, they must be indited in the simplicity of pure devotion. And let the notes of sacred music have the same delightful simplicity. Let them be adapted to Congregational singing. Let all be trained to sing as early and as universally as they are taught to read; and if we would have the soul ascending in the song, let the whole assembly join in the solemn hymn which they raise to God. The primitive church knew nothing of a choir, set apart and withdrawn from the congregation, for the exclusive performance of this delightful part of public worship. "The Bible knows nothing of a worship conducted by a few, in behalf of a silent multitude; but calls upon everything that hath breath to join in this divine employ." Have we done well, then, in substituting for the voice of all the people in the praise of God, the voice of a few in a choir? For the sweet simplicity of ancient melodies, hallowed by a thousand sacred associations, have we wisely introduced the musical display of modern airs? Have we done well in substituting, even for the rude simplicity of our fathers, if such you please to call it, the profane and secular airs of some modern harmonies? After admiring those noble portraits of the great and revered reformer which adorn the galleries of his native country, clad in the easy, simple and appropriate costume of his age, who would endure the sight of that venerable form dressed out in the modern style, so trim and sleek, of a fashionable fop? With the same wretched taste do we mar, in attempting to mend the music of the great masters of another age, by conforming it to the style of the present.

It is exceedingly gratifying to observe in the public journals and current literature of the day, the return of the public mind to a better taste in sacred music; and to notice that

several of the ablest masters in the country have entered in earnest upon the work of reform. Heaven speed their work, and hasten on the day, when, with sweet accord of hearts and voices attuned to the worship of God, all shall join in singing to his praise in the great congregation.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOMILIES IN THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

UNDER this head we shall direct our attention,

I. To the discourses of Christ and of the apostles.
II. To the homilies of the fathers in the Greek church.
III. To those of the fathers in the Latin church.

I. The discourses of Christ and of the apostles.

The reading of the Scriptures, in connection with remarks and exhortations, constituted a part of the social worship of the primitive church. The apostles, wherever they went, frequented the synagogues of the Jews, where, after the reading of the Scriptures, an invitation was given to any one to remark upon what had been read. In this way they took occasion to speak of Christ and his doctrines to their brethren. Their addresses were occasional and apposite; varied, with consummate skill, according to the circumstances of the hearer, and addressed, with great directness and pungency, to the understanding and the heart.

In the Acts, we have brief notices of several of the addresses of Peter, and of Paul, and of one from Stephen, from which we may gather a distinct impression of their style of address. The first from Peter was before the disciples, who, to the number of one hundred and twenty, were assembled to elect a substitute in the place of the traitor, Judas. Acts 1: 15. It is calculated to soothe the minds of his hearers, op-

pressed by the melancholy end of this apostate, by showing that all had transpired according to the prediction of God's word, and to fulfil the counsel of his will.

The second was delivered on the occasion of the shedding abroad of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Acts 2: 14. After refuting the malicious charge of having drunk to excess, he proceeds to show from the Scriptures, that all which the multitude saw was only the fulfilment of ancient prophecy; he charges them with having crucified the Lord Jesus Christ, whom God had exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins. Such was the force of his cutting reproof, that three thousand were brought to believe in Christ crucified.

His third address, on the occasion of healing the lame man in the temple, Acts iii, was of the same character, and attended with a similar result. His fourth and fifth were delivered before the Sanhedrim, in defence of himself and the apostles. Acts 4: 7. 5: 29. Of these we only know that the subject was the same as in the preceding,—Christ, wickedly crucified and slain by the Jews, and raised from the dead for the salvation of men. Before Cornelius the centurion, Acts 6: 34, after explaining the miraculous manner in which his Jewish prejudices had been overruled, and how he had been led to see the comprehensive nature of the gospel system, he gives an outline of its great truths, attested by the Scriptures, relating to Christ, to the resurrection and the final judgment. All these discourses manifest the same boldness and fervency of spirit, and are directed to produce the same result—repentance for sin, and faith in Christ.

Stephen, in his defence before the Sanhedrim, Acts vii, traces the history of God's dispensations to the Jews, and of their treatment of his servants the prophets, whom they had rejected and slain, and charges them with having finally consummated their guilt by becoming the betrayers and murderers of the holy and just One. Paul, in his address at Anti-

och, pursues the same style; showing how, from age to age, God had been unfolding his purpose to give salvation to men by Jesus Christ, and finally bringing the whole to bear with tremendous force in its application to his hearers. "Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken in the prophets; 'Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your day, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.'" Acts 13: 40, 41. Time would fail us to follow the apostle in his masterly address before the Areopagus at Athens, Acts 17: 22,—to attend to his affecting interview with the elders of Ephesus at Miletus, Acts 20: 18, and to his admirable defence before the Jews, and before Festus, and Agrippa the king, Acts xxii, xxiii, xxvi. With the Greeks he reasoned as a Greek, making no reference to the Jewish Scriptures; but, from their own poets, and the natural principles of philosophy and of religion, convincing them of the vanity of their superstitions. With the Jews he reasoned as a Jew, out of their own sacred books, and testified to all, both Jew and Greek, the great doctrines of repentance, and faith in Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the general judgment.

The addresses of the apostles are remarkable at once for their simplicity and their power. None ever preached with such effect as they. Wherever they went converts were multiplied and churches reared up, in defiance of all opposition, and in the face of every conceivable discouragement. Strong in faith and mighty in the Scriptures, these few men, in a few short years, were instrumental in making greater conquests over the kingdom of Satan, and winning more souls to Christ, than all the missionaries of all Christendom have gained in half a century. Whence, then, this mighty power? Without venturing into this interesting field of inquiry, we may offer a few suggestions in relation to the characteristics of the apostles' preaching.

1. They insisted chiefly on a few cardinal points, comprising the great truths of the Christian religion.

Christ, and him crucified; repentance; faith in Christ and the remission of sins; the resurrection; and the general judgment;—these are the great points to which all their addresses are directed. The simplicity of these truths gave a like simplicity to their preaching. Beaming full on their own minds, and occupying their whole soul, these momentous truths fell from their lips with tremendous power upon the hearts and consciences of their hearers. No power of oratory or strength of argument could equal the awful conception which they had of what they preached. They could, therefore, only speak in the fulness of their hearts, and with earnestness and simplicity, what they had heard, and seen, and felt. The word thus spoken was quick and powerful; it cut to the heart; it converted the soul.

2. Their full conviction of the truths which they preached, gave directness and pungency to their addresses.

They preached no cunningly-devised fables. No refined speculations or doubtful disputations employed their speech. But, honest in their sacred cause, and much impressed with what they said, and anxious only to fasten the same impression in the minds of their hearers, they spoke with honest earnestness, the convictions of their inmost soul. These strong convictions gave them the noblest eloquence, the eloquence of truth and of nature. *Pietas est quod disertum facit*, says the great Roman orator. Piety inspires true eloquence. This was the secret of their eloquence. They felt the high importance of what they said; and, springing from the heart, their exhortations touched the hearts of those to whom they spoke.

3. Their preaching was wholly *scriptural;* based on the Scriptures, and restricted to the single purpose of making manifest the truths of God's word.

They preached not themselves, but Jesus Christ, in the very character in which he is revealed in the word of God, and to which all the prophets have given testimony. Stand-

ing thus in the counsel of the Lord, they had strong ground of defence, and holy boldness in declaring what God had said. Their preaching was, accordingly, in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Armed with this energy divine, is it wonderful that the word spoken had this quickening power?

4. The contradiction and persecution which they continually experienced, gave peculiar earnestness and power to their ministrations.

One who, like Paul, could say, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God," Acts 20: 24;—such a man only waxes bolder in the truth by all the conflicts to which he is called; and summons up unwonted powers in proclaiming the gospel which he preaches at the peril of his life. Standing in jeopardy every hour, with an eye fixed on eternity, and fearless of every foe, is it surprising that, with surpassing energy and power, the apostles declared the gospel of the grace of God to their fellow-men?

5. They preached in God's name, and were sustained by the undoubted assurance of his support.

They were ambassadors for God; and, supported by his authority, had great boldness in declaring the messages of his grace. If God be for us, who can be against us? Strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, fearless of danger and of death, they gave themselves up to the guidance of his Spirit, speaking as the Holy Ghost gave them utterance; and like their Lord, teaching as one having authority, and not as the Scribes.

After those fragments of the public addresses of Christ and the apostles, which are recorded in the Scriptures, no example of a similar discourse in the primitive church remains, un-

til we come down to Origen, in the third century. It is, however, generally admitted, that such familiar remarks, in connection with the reading of the Scriptures, continued uniformly to constitute a part of the social and public worship of the primitive Christians. Such instructions were expected particularly from the presbyters, Acts 20 : 28. 1 Pet. 5 : 2; but the privilege of public speaking was not restricted to them. The freedom of their worship permitted any one, with the exception of the female sex, to speak in their assemblies. This was not originally the exclusive or principal duty of the presbyter.[1] Hilary's testimony to this effect has already been given.[2] Origen, again, was invited by the bishops of Caesarea and the vicinity to preach in public, though he had never been ordained as a presbyter.[3]

Tertullian, and Justin Martyr, each say enough to show that the churches of Africa and Asia, respectively, still conducted their religious worship in the freedom and simplicity of earlier days. "We meet together to read the holy Scriptures, and, when circumstances permit, to admonish one another. In such sacred discourse we establish our faith, we encourage our hope, we confirm our trust, and quicken our obedience to the word by a renewed application of its truths."[4] The whole account indicates that "the brethren" sought, by familiar remarks, and mutual exhortations, to enforce a practical application of the portion of the Scriptures which had been read; and to encourage one another in their religious hopes and duties.

The account from Justin, which has already been given, corresponds with that of Tertullian, with the single exception, that the addresses were from the presiding presbyter,

[1] Apost. Kirch. 1. c. 5. Comp. J. H. Böhmer, Dissertat. 7. De Dif. inter ordinem ecclesiast. etc. § 39. Eschenberg, Versuch Religionsvorträge, S. 85. Rothe, Anfänge, Vol. 1. S. 155—160.

[2] Chap. 11. p. 340.

[3] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 6. c. 19. Comp. Lib. 5. c. 10. Lib. 6. 19.

[4] Tertullian, Apol. 39.

who conducted the worship of the assembly. In both instances it was a *biblical exercise*, designed to enforce a practical application of the truths which had been presented in the reading. Not a single text, but the entire passage from the Scriptures which had been read, was the subject of remark.

The taste of the present age is against this style of preaching; and, by common consent of pastor and people, it has fallen into neglect. But it has certain peculiar advantages, which deservedly recommend it to the consideration of every minister of Christ.

1. It is recommended by apostolical precedent.

The apostles were directed by wisdom from on high, to adopt, or, if you please, to continue this mode of address in the Christian church. They were content simply to commend the truth to their hearers as God had revealed it. They strove, as the only and ultimate end of all their preaching, to lay open the heart and conscience to the naked truth of God. So presented and applied, that truth became quick and powerful in producing the end of all preaching,—the conviction and conversion of men.

2. This style of preaching is recommended by its practical efficacy.

Never, elsewhere, has the ministry of man been attended with results so interesting and momentous as were those which followed the ministrations of the holy men in the first ages of the church, who knew no other style of address than the one we are considering, and who simply sought to give a plain exposition of Scripture, with a direct and pungent application to the hearer.

3. Expository preaching gives variety to the ministrations of the pulpit.

The preacher, by continually offering the hasty suggestions of his own mind, is in danger of falling into a regular train of thought and illustration; and this, by frequent recurrence,

may give sameness to his ministrations, and render them as monotonous, almost, as the regular tone of his voice. His sermons thrown off in quick succession, from a mind jaded by the ceaseless recurrence of the same duties, may not unfrequently exhibit to the hearer only the separate lineaments of the same features. But in the various portions of the sacred volume there is a variety, a richness, and fertility which no uninspired intellect ever possessed; and these, if successively introduced, may be an exhaustless theme of discourse,—ever new, gratefully diversified, and yet alike interesting and edifying in their turn. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. 2 Tim. 3: 16. Why forever set this aside, to inflict upon our auditory what is too often the production of a barren mind, or a wearied intellect and a cold heart.

4. Expository addresses afford the happiest means of applying religious instruction to all classes and conditions of men.

In a consecutive exposition of the Scriptures a vast variety of topics arises, which, discreetly handled, may be made the means of enforcing duties, that otherwise would never be embraced within the teachings of the ministry. A single epistle of Paul, or one of the evangelists, thus expounded, will in a few months, lead the preacher to remark upon many subjects, which, otherwise, in the whole course of his ministry, might never find a place in his public discourses.

5. The preparation of such discourses affords the preacher the happiest opportunity of enriching his own mind with varied and profitable learning.

Many a sermon is written without the addition of a single valuable thought, or of a new fact to the acquisitions of the preacher. But how varied the inquiries which arise in the attempt to elucidate a portion of Scripture. Geography, history, philology, philosophy, theology doctrinal and practical,

all are put in requisition, and bring their varied contributions to elucidate the sacred page, and to enrich his own mind. His lexicons are recalled from the neglected shelf. His Bible, in the original tongue, is resumed. He drinks at the sacred fountain, refreshing alike to the heart and the mind, and returns to his people with fresh acquisitions, that make him both a wiser man and a better clergyman.

Finally, this mode of address, above all others, gives the preacher opportunity to bring the truth of God, with its living, life-giving power, to bear upon the minds of his people.

That which the preacher speaks is now no longer his own. It is Jehovah's awful voice which speaks, calling upon the hearer to listen obediently to his high commands. The audience may cavil at the preacher, or sit by in cold indifference, but they have a solemn interest in these messages of God to them. Opposition is silenced, and the ear is opened to attend while Jehovah speaks. What would have fallen powerless from the preacher's lips, now comes with divine authority and power to convince and convert the soul. Multitudes, on earth and in heaven, can attest the mighty power of divine truth, thus plainly set forth from the word of God, in bringing them to repentance. Let the minister observe the moral efficacy of his various ministrations, and he will find that when he has ceased to preach himself, when he has withdrawn *himself* most from the notice of his hearers, and brought forward the word of God, to unfold to them its tremendous truths, then has he seen the happiest fruits of his labors. Let him return, after a long absence, to the former scene of his labors, and he will find, that while his hearers have forgotten his most elaborate sermons, they still remember his faithful expositions of the word of God in the evening-lecture.

II. Homilies in the Greek church.[5]

From the third century, the homilies of the Greek and Roman fathers are so different, that it will be most convenient to consider them separately, confining our attention to that period which extends in the Greek church, from Origen, A. D. 230, to Chrysostom, A. D. 400, and in the Roman, from Cyprian to Augustine.

With Origen a new style of public address began in the Greek church, which had, indeed, some advantages, but was attended by many and still greater faults. The following brief outline of the characteristics of the style of preaching now under consideration, and of the circumstances which led to its adoption, is given chiefly from Eschenburg, who is admitted to have written on this subject with more candor and discrimination than any other author.

1. Origen introduced that allegorical mode of interpreting the Scriptures, which, while it affected to illustrate, continued, for a long time, to darken the sacred page. Not content with a plain and natural elucidation of the historical sense of the text, it sought for some hidden meaning, darkly shadowed forth in allegorical, mystical terms. Great as was Origen in talent, industry, and learning, he showed still greater weakness in the childish fancies in which he indulged as an interpreter of Scripture. The great respect in which he was held gave currency to his mode of preaching, so that he became the father of all that allegorical nonsense, which for a long time continued to dishonor the public preaching of the ancient church.

2. The sermons of the period under consideration, were

[5] The writers of the period now under consideration, are Origen, A. D. 230, Gregory of Neocaesarea, A. D. 240; Athanasius, A. D. 325; Basil the Great, A. D. 370; Gregory of Nyssa, A. D. 370; Gregory Nazianzen, 379. Among others of less note, may be classed, Methodius, A. D. 290; Macarius, A. D. 373; Ephraem the Syrian, A. D. 370; Amphiloginus, A. D. 370—375; and Nectarius, A. D. 381.

occupied with profitless, polemical discussions and speculative theories.

The question with the preacher seems too often to have been, not what will produce the fruits of holy living, and prepare the hearer for eternity; but how the opinions of another can best be controverted; worthless dogmas, it may be, deserving no serious consideration. The speculations in which the preacher indulged were advanced without due regard to their *practical tendency*. Whether those who adopted them would be made wiser and better, was a question not often asked. Doctrinal points, rather than moral truths, were taught from the Scriptures; and often were sentiments condemned which were truly just, while others were extolled which were wholly worthless.

3. The preachers of this period claimed most undeserved respect for their own authority.

Flattered by the great consideration in which they were held, and the confidence in which the people waited on them for instruction, they converted the pulpit into a stage for the exhibition of their own pertinacity, ignorance and folly. They manifested an angry impatience at the errors of others, persecuted them for following their own convictions, and condemned them for refusing assent to arbitrary forms, which they themselves prescribed as conditions of salvation. With all their self-conceit, they manifested a time-serving spirit. As the opinions of the court and of the principal men in the nation favored one religious party or another, so were they more or less reserved in exposing the errors of the same. The polemic discourses from the pulpit changed with every change of administration; and what a short time before had been advanced as wholesome truth, under a change of circumstances came to be denounced as damnable heresy.

4. The sermons of this period were as faulty in style, as they were exceptionable in the other characteristics which have been mentioned.

Not only was the simplicity which characterized the teachings of Christ and of the apostles, in a great measure lost, in absurd and puerile expositions of Scripture, and corrupted by the substitution of vain speculations, derived especially from the Platonic philosophy, but the style of the pulpit was in other respects vitiated and corrupt. Philosophical terms and rhetorical flourishes, forms of expression extravagant and far-fetched, biblical expressions unintelligible to the people, unmeaning comparisons, absurd antitheses, spiritless interrogations, senseless exclamations and bombast, disfigure the sermons of the period now under consideration.

Causes which contributed to form the style above described.

1. The prevalence of pagan philosophy.

The preacher was compelled to acquaint himself with the philosophical speculations of the day, to expose their subtleties, and he unconsciously fell into a similar mode of philosophizing.

2. The conversion of many philosophers to Christianity, especially at the beginning of this period, had an influence in corrupting the simplicity of the Christian system, both in doctrine and in discourse.

They sought to incorporate their philosophical principles with the doctrines of Christianity, and to introduce their rhetoric and sophistries into the discourses of the clergy. Every discussion gave occasion for the introduction of various forms of expression unknown in Scripture. But to give greater authority to such discussions, certain phrases were selected from the Scriptures, to which a meaning was attached similar to the philosophical terms in use; and out of this strange combination, a new dialect was formed for the pulpit. In this way the few and simple doctrines of Christianity received from an impure philosophy many additions from time to time; and by continual controversy were darkened the more, and

gradually almost excluded from the instructions of the pulpit.

3. The evil in question was aggravated by the want of suitable preparation for the ministry.

Some betook themselves to the schools of the Platonic philosophy, and became practised in the arts of the orators and sophists of the day. Others sought, in deserts and in cloisters, to prepare themselves for the sacred office. Here they brooded over what they had previously read and heard. Here, removed from intercourse with men, they only learned to be visionary, perverse, self-willed and immoral. The consequence was, that their instructions abounded with distorted, false views of virtue and doctrine, and of the means of moral improvement.

4. Ignorance of the original languages of the Scriptures, and of just principles of interpretation, contributed to the same result.

Philo, Plato, and others, were read, instead of the evangelists, and Paul, and the other apostles. The Hebrew was little cultivated, and the true principles of interpretation were unknown.

5. A blind self-conceit had much influence in setting aside the great truths and duties of religion.

Forgetful of the religious edification of his people, the preacher was occupied with speculations upon trifling and unmeaning things. These accordingly were the topics of his public discourses, whenever he was not employed in the endeavor to expose some heretical dogma.

6. The religious controversy of the day gave an unprofitable direction to the instructions of the pulpit.

The preacher had constantly the attitude of a polemic, watching with a vigilant eye any defection from the truth, and hastening to oppose the outbreak of some destructive heresy.

7. The increasing influence of the bishop.

This was itself a new source of polemical discussion. The bishops at the head of their churches, and, in the larger cities, already having great authority over the presbyters and deacons, would not receive from these the least contradiction. If any reflection was cast upon the dignity of the bishop, whether justly or unjustly, that was enough. Not content merely to be honored, the bishops would be implicitly obeyed. To this demand some one perhaps ventured to dissent. If he had the courage or inconsideration to advance an opposite opinion concerning a doctrine of Scripture, or a sentiment avowed in a public address, he was, if possible, ejected from office by the bishop; and for what he had said or written was condemned as a heretic.

8. The increasing formalities of public worship had no small influence in diverting the mind from the true object of public religious instruction.

These forms, of which Christianity in its original simplicity had so few, were generally multiplied; great attention was paid to the adorning of the churches; festivals became numerous; the effect of all which was to turn off the mind from the essential truths and duties of religion, and fasten attention upon other things, which have not the least influence in promoting the spiritual improvement of man. The preacher sought to adapt his addresses to these forms and festivals,[6]

[6] "Of this depraved state of the public mind, we have a striking example from Socrates. In relating the endless discords of the churches in regard to their rites and festivals, he refers to the decision of the apostolical council, Acts 15: 23—30, to show that the apostles gave no instructions touching these forms, but insisted only on moral duties, and proceeds to say, 'some, however, regardless of these practical injunctions, treat with indifference, *every species of licentiousness*, but contend as if for their lives for the *days when a festival should be held*.'" —*Eccl. Hist.* Lib. 5. c. 22. The same degeneracy characterized the church before the Reformation. "In proportion as a higher value was attached to outward rites, the sanctification of the heart, had become less and less an object of concern; dead ordinances had everywhere usurped the place of a Christian life; and, by a revolting yet natural alliance, the most scandalous debauchery had been combined

and often fell into extravagances and fanaticism. Monks, ascetics and recluses were extolled as saints, and commended as examples of piety.

Finally, the effeminacy, the tendency to gloom and melancholy, and the love of the marvellous which have ever characterized the Eastern nations, became to some extent infused into the religious discourses of their preachers.

III. Homilies in the Latin church.

The writers of this same period, from A. D. 250 to 400, to whom reference is had in the following remarks, are Cyprian, Zeno and Ambrose. The characteristic distinctions between these and the Greek fathers whose public discourses have been considered, are given by our author in the following summary.

1. The Latins were inferior to the Greeks, in their exegesis of the Scriptures. They accumulated a multitude of passages, without just discrimination or due regard to their application to the people.

2. They interested themselves less with speculative and polemic theology than the Greeks.

3. They insisted upon moral duties more than the Greeks, but were equally unfortunate in their mode of treating these topics, by reason of the undue importance which they attached to the forms and ceremonies of religion; hence their reverence for saints and relics, their vigils, fasts, penances and austerities of every kind.

4. In method and style the homilies of the Latin fathers are greatly inferior to those of the Greeks.

with the most superstitious devotion. Instances are on record of theft committed at the altar, seduction practised in the confessional, poison mingled with the Eucharist, adultery perpetrated at the foot of the cross."—*D'Aubigné's Ref.* Vol. III. p. 348. This is one of the evils of Prelacy. It encourages a debasing superstition which, by corrupting the doctrines of religion, vitiates the morals of the people.

Causes productive of these characteristics.

1. The lack of suitable means of education.

They neither had schools of theology, like the Greeks, nor were they as familiar with the literature and oratory of their own people. Ambrose was promoted to the office of bishop, with scarcely any preparation for its duties.

2. Ignorance of the original languages of the Bible.

Of the Hebrew they knew nothing; of the original of the New Testament they knew little; and still less of all that is essential to its right interpretation. When they resorted to the Scriptures, it was too frequently to oppose heresy by an indiscriminate accumulation of texts. When they attempted to explain, it was by perpetual allegories.

3. The want of suitable examples, and a just standard of public speaking.

Basil, Ephraem the Syrian, and the two Gregories, were contemporaries, and were mutual helps and incentives to one another. Others looked to them as patterns for public preaching. But such advantages were unknown in the Latin church. The earlier classic authors of Greece and Rome were discarded, from bigotry; or, through ignorance, so much neglected, that their influence was little felt.

4. The unsettled state of the Western churches should be mentioned in this connection.

Persecuted and in exile at one time, at another engaged in fierce and bloody contests among themselves,[7] the preachers of the day had little opportunity to prepare for their appropriate duties. Literature was neglected. Under Constantine, Rome herself ceased to be the seat of the fine arts, and barbarism began its disastrous encroachments upon the provinces of the Western church.

5. The increasing importance of the bishop's office.

The pride of the bishops, and their neglect of their duty

[7] The contests for the election of bishops often ran so high as to end in bloodshed and murder, of which an example is given in Walch's History of the Popes, p. 87. Ammianus Marcellinus, Lib. 27. c. 3.

as preachers, kept pace with their advancement in authority. As in the Greek church, so also in the Latin, this sense of their own importance gave a polemic character to their preaching. But in the latter church they were not merely careful to assert and defend their own dignity; many also became indolent and pleasure-loving, as their incomes increased; or they manifested a spirit equally foreign from that of a public religious teacher. They sought, in every possible way, to promote their own power and self-aggrandizement. They created new and needless offices, better suited to assist them in commanding, in governing, and in maintaining their dignity, than to promote the instruction and edification of the people. By such means they sought to blind the eyes of the people, and to forestall the popular sentiment, which otherwise might be too easily formed against their pride and neglect of duty as religious teachers.

Others sought, by the appearance of great sanctity, by celibacy and seclusion, by fasting and the like, to maintain and to augment their importance. In the practice of these austerities, they wasted so much time that little remained to be employed in preparation for public speaking.

6. The increase of the ceremonies and forms of public worship.

The effect of all these was, to give importance to the bishop; and, in his zeal for the introduction and general adoption of them, the essential points of the Christian religion were forgotten. Need we relate with what zeal Victor, the Roman bishop, engaged in the controversies respecting Easter and the ceremonies connected with it? What complicated rites were involved with the simple ordinance of baptism, and the abuses with which they were connected; what importance, what sanctity, was ascribed to their fasts, and what controversies arose between the Latin and the Greek church from the reluctance of the latter to adopt the rites of the former? What in-

credible effects were ascribed to the sign of the cross?[8] Where indeed would the enumeration end, if we should attempt a specification of all the ceremonies, with their various abuses, which were introduced during the period under consideration? Thus ancient Episcopacy touched with its withering blight the ministrations of the pulpit, both in the churches of the East and of the West.[9]

To the foregoing view we subjoin one or two remarks.

1. Episcopacy is an incumbrance to the faithful minister in the discharge of his appropriate duties.

The reader has noticed what obstacles these ancient prelatists of the church encountered in their ministry. So much attention was requisite to guard the Episcopal prerogatives, such vigilance to root out the heresies that were perpetually shooting up in rank luxuriance within the church; so much time was wasted in useless discussions about rites and forms, festivals and fasts, and all the ceremonials of their religion, as sadly to divert their attention from their appropriate work of winning souls to Christ.

All this is only the natural result of an exclusive and formal religion. Such a religion addresses itself powerfully to strong, original principles of our nature. And the results are as distinctly manifest in modern, as they were in ancient prelacy. Undue importance is given to the externals of religion, which have little or no place in the ministrations of the pulpit. In the perpetual lauding of the church, her rites, and her liturgy; in the conscious reliance upon her ordinances; in the sanctimonious exclusiveness, which boasts of apostolical succession and divine right; in the sleepless vigilance to guard against any imaginable departure from the rubric,—in

[8] Cyprian, Lib. 2. Testimon. adv. Indaeos. c. 21, 22. Lactant. Instit. Lib. 4. c. 27, 28. Vol. 1. p. 594, ed Büemann.

[9] Many other particulars in relation to the homilies of the ancient church are given in the author's Christian Antiquities, c. 12. pp. 237—252.

all these we see the influences still at work, which wrought such mischief in the ministry of ancient prelacy; still, as then, embarrassing the faithful preaching of Christ and him crucified. The charges of the bishops and the sermons of the clergy, show distinctly the strong bias which the mind receives from a religion surcharged with ceremonials, and boasting its exclusive prerogatives. These unconsciously assume undue importance in the preacher's mind. His Bible furnishes him with a text; but too frequently his rubric suggests his subject.[10] Such is the natural course of the human mind. It fastens strongly upon what is outward and sensual; forgetful of that which is inward and spiritual. "The Divine Founder of Christianity, as if in wise jealousy of a tendency which may be so easily abused, confined the ceremonials of his religion within the strictest limits."

According to the canons of the church, which were adopted in 1603, "whosoever shall affirm that the rites and ceremonies of that church are 'wicked, antichristian, or *superstitious*,' shall be excommunicated, *ipso facto*, and not restored

[10] Even the Christian Observer, for May, 1804, has an article from a churchman, gravely inquiring, not after the best means for the conversion of men, and their continuance in the Christian faith, but for the "most effectual means which a faithful clergyman can take during his life, *in order to prevent his flock from becoming Dissenters after his death!*" As though the highest ends of a faithful Episcopal minister were, not to save the souls of his people, but to save them from becoming *Dissenters*. In the foregoing remarks, allusion has hardly been made to the Puseyite party in that church; and yet a late writer claims on that side, *nine* of the thirteen charges which have been delivered by English bishops, within a short time past; and even of the remaining four, only one was decidedly against the party. One of this class, instead of being absorbed in the great doctrines of the gospel, is intent, with almost a mystic monomania, upon the arrangement of the merest trifles,—clerical costume and pulpit etiquette, chaplets, crosses, crucifixes, wax candles, flowers, "red," "white," and "intermingled."

"Nescio quid meditans nugarum et totus in illis."

until he repent, and publicly revoke his wicked errors." Can. 6. The seventy-fourth canon directs that archbishops and bishops shall wear the accustomed apparel of their degrees, and that the subordinate orders shall "wear gowns with standing sleeves, straight at the hands; or wide sleeves, with hoods or tippets, of silk or sarcanet, and square caps." They are not to wear "wrought night-caps, but only plain night-caps of black silk, satin, or velvet." At home they may wear "any comely or scholar-like apparel, provided it be not cut or pinkt; and that in public they go not in their doublet and hose, without coats or cassocks; and that they wear not any light-colored stockings." All this is gravely entered in the canons of the church, and "ratified by letters-patent from the king, under the great seal of England, after having been diligently read with great contentment and comfort."

2. As a conservative principle, to preserve the unity of the church, Episcopacy is entirely inadequate.

If the unity of the church consist in *a name* merely, and in *forms*,—in the use of a prayer-book and surplice,—then may Episcopacy be said to preserve this unity; but in what else have they of this communion ever been united? how else have they kept the unity of the faith? In the ancient church what was the success of the Episcopal expedient to preserve the unity of the church? Let Milton reply. "Heresy begat heresy with a certain monstrous haste of pregnancy in her birth, at once born and bringing forth. Contentions, before brotherly, were now hostile. Men went to choose their bishop, as they went to a pitched field, and the day of his election was like the sacking of a city, sometimes ending in the blood of thousands;.. so that, instead of finding prelacy an impeacher of schism and faction, the more I search, the more I grow into all persuasion to think rather, that faction and she, as with a spousal ring, are wedded together, never to be divorced." [11]

[11] Prose Works, Vol. I. pp. 121, 122.

What idea does the profession of Episcopacy at present give of one's religious faith? Is he Calvinistic, Arminian, or Unitarian; high-church or low-church; Puseyitish, semi-popish, or what? "The religion of the Church of England," says Macaulay, "is so far from exhibiting that unity of doctrine which Mr. Gladstone represents as her distinguishing glory, that it is, in fact, a bundle of religious systems without number. It comprises the religious system of Bishop Tomline, and the religious system of John Newton, and all the religious systems that lie between them. It comprises the religious system of Mr. Newman, and the religious system of the Archbishop of Dublin, and all the religious systems that lie between. All these different opinions are held, avowed, preached, printed, within the pale of the church, by men of unquestioned integrity and understanding."[12]

As an expedient, therefore, to preserve the unity of the church, Episcopacy must be pronounced an entire failure. And yet they of this denomination present the extraodinary spectacle, of the most discordant sect in all Christendom boasting the conservative powers of their religion as its distinguishing glory, and urging a return to this, their "one body in Christ," as the only means of preserving the unity of the church!"

[12] Review of Gladstone's Church and State. Miscel. Vol. 3. p. 306.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BENEDICTION.

I. Origin and import of the rite.

It seems to have been from remote antiquity, a common belief, that either a blessing or a curse, when pronounced with solemnity, is peculiarly efficacious upon those who are the objects of it.[1] So common was this belief, that it gave rise to the proverb, "The blessing and the curse fail not of their fulfilment." The consequences were momentous, according to the character of the person from whom the prophetic sentiment proceeded. The blessing of the aged patriarch, of the prophet, the priest, and the king, was sought with peculiar interest, and their execration deprecated with corresponding anxiety. Of the king's curse we have an instance, in 1 Sam. 14: 24. Saul adjured the people and said, Cursed be the man that eateth any food until the evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies. Comp. Josh. 6: 26, with 1 Kings 16: 34. The blessing and the curse of Noah upon his sons, Gen. 9: 25—28, and of Moses upon the children of Israel, Deut. xxviii, xxxiii, are familiar illustrations of the same sentiment, as is also the history of Balaam, whose curse upon Israel Balak sought with so much solicitude, Num. xxii, xxiii, xxiv. The blessing of the patriarchs Isaac and Jacob, respectively, was sought with peculiar anxiety, as conveying to their posterity the favor of God and the smiles of his provi-

[1] Dira detestatio nulla expiatur victima.—*Hor. Epod.* 5, 90. Hence also the expression, *Thyestcae preces*, in the same ode. Comp. Iliad. 9, 455.

dence. Gen. xxvii, and xlviii, xlix. Comp. Deut. xxxiii. The son of Sirach expresses a similar sentiment, 3: 9. "The blessing of the father establisheth the houses of children; but the curse of the mother rooteth out foundations."

With the question relative to the prophetic character of these patriarchal benedictions we are not now concerned. It is sufficient for our present purpose that the benediction of patriarchs, of parents, and of all those who were venerable for their age, or for their religious or official character, was regarded as peculiarly efficacious in propitiating the favor of God towards those upon whom the blessing was pronounced.

In addition to all this, the Aaronitic priesthood were divinely constituted the mediators between God and his people Israel. They were the intercessors for his people before his altar; and stood in their official character, as daysmen between the children of Israel and Jehovah their God. In this official capacity, Aaron and his sons were directed to bless the children of Israel, saying, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make his face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace." Thus were they to put the name of God upon the children of Israel, and the promise of God was that he would bless them. Num. 6: 24—27. In conformity with this commission to the house of Aaron, it was a universal custom in the worship of the Jews, both in the temple and in their synagogues, for the people to receive the blessing only at the mouth of the priests, the sons of Aaron. If none of these priests were present, another was accustomed to *invoke* the blessing of God, supplicating in the prayer the triple blessings of the benediction, that the assembly might not retire unblessed; but this was carefully distinguished from the sacerdotal benediction.[2]

This view of the subject may perhaps aid us in forming a just idea of the nature and import of the sacerdotal benedic-

[2] Vitringa, De Synagoga, Lib. 3, part 2. c. 20.

tion. The term *benediction* is used to express both the act of *blessing*, and that of *consecrating*,—two distinct religious rites. The sacerdotal benediction, according to the views above expressed, seems to be *a brief prayer, offered with peculiar solemnity unto God, for his blessing upon the people, by one who has been duly set apart to the service of the ministry, as an intercessor with God in their behalf.*[3]

Both this and the other forms of benediction, in the acts of consecration and dedication, are exclusively the acts of the clergy. Only the higher grades of the clergy were permitted in the ancient church, to enjoy this prerogative. The council of Ancyra and others restricted it to bishops and presbyters.[4] And in all Christian churches it is still a general rule that none but a clergyman is entitled to pronounce the benediction. In the Lutheran church none but an *ordained* clergyman is duly authorized to perform this rite. The licentiate accordingly includes himself in the petition, saying, not as the ordained minister, The Lord bless *you*, etc., but The Lord bless *us*. And if a layman is officiating, he includes the form of benediction in his prayer, varying yet again the emphasis, and saying, The Lord *bless* us, etc. Their doctrine is, that the minister stands in *the place of Christ*, to bless the people in his name; and that in the benediction there is an actual conferring of the blessing of God upon the people—of which, however, none are partakers but those who receive it in faith. Such, also, is the Roman Catholic doctrine of the priesthood, derived from the prelacy of the ancient church. Immediately upon the rise of Episcopacy, the clergy began to claim kindred with the Jewish priesthood. The bishop became the representative of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the priesthood, like that of the Jews, the *mediators* be-

[3] According to Ambrose, the benediction is—*sanctificationibus et gratiarum votiva collatio—votiva;* quia benedicens vovet et optat.—*J. Gretseri*, Vol. V. 178, in Lib. 1. De Benedictionibus.

[4] Conc. Nic. c. 18. Ancyr. c. 2. Arelat. 1. c. 15. Constit. Apost. Lib. 8. c. 28.

tween God and man. This delusive dogma changed the character of the Christian ministry. They now became the priests of a *vicarious religion*, ministering before the Lord, *for the people*, as the medium of communicating his blessing to them. This perversion of the Christian idea of the ministry, which in an evil hour was put forth as the doctrine of the church, opened the way for infinite superstitions, and did more harm to spiritual Christianity than any single delusion that ever afflicted the church of Christ. It is remarkable, however, that neither the New Testament nor primitive Christianity gives us any intimation of a vicarious priesthood.

With reference to the intercessory office of the Jewish priesthood, Christ our mediator and intercessor with the Father is, indeed, styled our great High Priest. Heb. 4: 14. Comp. also, 2: 17. 3: 1. 5: 10. His benediction he pronounced upon the little children, when he took them in his arms and blessed them. Mark 10: 16. In his separation from his disciples at Bethany, when he was about to return unto his Father in heaven, he ended his instructions to them by pronouncing upon them his final benediction. "He lifted up his hands and blessed them; and it came to pass, that while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven." Luke 24: 50, 51. These acts, however, have no reference to the sacerdotal benedictions of the Jewish priesthood. They are only the expressions of the benevolent spirit of our Lord; the manifestations of that love wherewith he loved his own to the end.

The apostles, also, frequently begin and end their epistles with an invocation of the blessing of God upon those to whom they write; sometimes in a single sentence, and sometimes with a triple form of expression, analogous to the Aaronitic benediction. But these, again, appear to be only general and customary expressions of the benevolent desires of the writer towards those whom he addresses. They are a brief prayer to the Author of all good for his blessing upon the per-

sons addressed. Whatever be the form of the salutation, it is only expressive of the love and benevolence, which swelled the hearts of the apostles towards the beloved brethren to whom they wrote.

But in all the writings of the New Testament we have no indication of the use of the *sacerdotal benediction*, in the Jewish and prelatical sense of the term, in the religious worship of the apostolical churches. It appears, indeed, not to have been a religious rite, either in the apostolical or primitive churches, during the first or second century. Neither the apostolical fathers, nor Justin Martyr, nor Tertullian, make any mention of the sacerdotal benediction. This omission of a religious rite, in itself so becoming and impressive, is the more remarkable in the primitive Christians, inasmuch as they, in other things, so closely imitated the rites of the Jewish synagogue, in which this was an established and important part of religious worship.

In regard to the reasons of this omission, writers upon the subject are not agreed. Some suppose that the secret discipline of the church afforded occasion for this omission. The doctrine of the Trinity was one of these sacred mysteries, which were carefully concealed from the uninitiated. So scrupulous were the churches on this point, that, for a time, even the use of the Lord's prayer was prohibited in public assemblies for religious worship; because it was thought that it conveyed an allusion to this sacred and hidden mystery.

Others suppose that the occurrence of the sacred name of God, יְהוָה, to the Jews, *verbum horrendi carminis*, which none but the high-priest was ever permitted to pronounce, and he only once a year, on the great day of the atonement, —that the occurrence of this awful name of Jehovah, was, to the early Christians, a reason for omitting the sacerdotal benediction.[5]

[5] Siegel, Handbuch, Vol. II. S. 114. J. H. Haenen, Exercit. de ritu benedictionis sacerdotalis. Jenae, 1682, cited by Siegel. Augusti, Denkwürdigkeiten, Vol. X. S. 179, 180.

But the reader, we doubt not, has anticipated us in assigning altogether another reason for the extraordinary omission of the sacerdotal benediction in the primitive church. Was it not the superintending providence of God, which graciously withheld the apostles and primitive Christians from adopting a rite, rendered obsolete by the great atoning sacrifice of the High Priest of our profession, and susceptible of unutterable abuses, as the subsequent history of the church too clearly shows? It is another instance of those remarkable *omissions*, of which Archbishop Whately has largely treated, and with consummate ability, in different works. He has noticed the wise precaution with which God in his providence so ordered events, that no possible trace should be found in the primitive church, of any prescribed mode of church government, to the exclusion of all others; or of a creed, or catechism, or confession, or form of prayer, or liturgy, upon which superstition could seize as an invariable rule of faith and practice, and abuse to support a sanctimonious religion, which should conform to the letter, but disregard the spirit of his word. Such an omission he regards as "literally miraculous." Copying so closely after the synagogue, and yet, against all their Jewish prejudices, dropping this rite of their synagogue-worship, the apostles must, on the same principle, be supposed to have been supernaturally withheld from taking that course which would *naturally* have appeared to them so desirable.

The apostolical benediction, then, in spirit and in import, is altogether unlike the Aaronitic benediction of the Jews, or the prelatical blessing of the bishop and priest. It is nothing more than a brief prayer; a benevolent desire, offered with solemnity unto God, for his blessing upon the people. The several forms of expression are one in meaning, and express the desire, that the blessing of God, both spiritual and temporal, may be and abide with the worshipping assembly. The clergyman alone pronounces the benediction, not in the vicarious character of mediator or intercessor between God

and his people, but solely in conformity with the apostolic precept, requiring all things to be done decently and in order. We now return to the prelatical use of the benediction.

II. Mode of administering the rite.

The Jewish priests pronounced the blessing, standing and facing the people, with the arms uplifted, the hands outspread, and with a peculiar position of the fingers ;[6] the congregation meanwhile standing. The attitude of the assembly and of the officiating priest was the same in the Christian church. But the words of the benediction were chanted, and the sign of the cross was given.

The sign of the cross both in the Eastern and Western church, was regarded as indispensable in the benediction. This sign is still retained, not only by the Roman Catholics, but even by many Protestants. The Lutherans make use of it, not only in the benediction, but in the consecration of the elements, in baptism, ordination, confirmation, absolution, etc. The church of England also retained the sign in baptism.[7] But how extensively it is observed at present in that church, the writer is not informed.

[6] Vitringa, De Synagoga, Lib. 3. p. 2. c. 20. p. 1118. Vitringa, Hadria, Reland, Antiq. Sac Vet. Heb. p. 102.

[7] See canon 30, where it is sanctioned and defended at length. The following is given, among many instances of the studied and superstitious formalities which have been observed, to give a mysterious significancy to this sign of the cross in the benediction. "Graeci aeque atque Latini, quinque digitis, et tota manu crucem signantes benedicunt. Differunt quod Latini, omnibus digitis extensis, Graeci indice medio ac minimo extensis ac modicum incurvatis, non ita tamen, ut inter se respondeant; sed pollex directione sit, rectaque respiciens, medius, pollicis incurvatione, introrsum vergat, minimus, inter pollicem et medium dirigatur; pollice super annularis ad sese moderate deflexi unguem apposito id agunt. Qua se ratione et tres divinas personas, digitis nempe tribus extensis; et duas in Christo naturas; duobus ad se junctis, rentur significare."—*Leo Allatius, De Eccl. Occid. et Orient. censens.*, Lib. 3. c. 18. pp. 1357—1361, cited by Augusti.

The benediction was sometimes sung, sometimes chanted, and sometimes pronounced as a prayer. There was no general rule or uniform custom on the subject. But when offered in connection with the responses of the people, it was sung and the responses chanted. Such, according to Augusti, is still the custom of the Lutheran church, and to some extent also of the other reformed churches.

In many places the benediction is pronounced twice, once at the close of the sermon, and again at the conclusion of the worship.

In Catholic churches the congregation kneel, or incline the head, while the benediction is pronounced. The priest, arrayed in clerical robes, stands with uplifted hands and a peculiar arrangement of the fingers; speaking in the Latin tongue, in an elevated tone and with a prolonged accent resembling a chant.

REMARKS.

1. The sacerdotal benediction was very early made the means of enhancing the sanctity of the clerical office generally, and especially of that of the bishop.

It was supposed to have a peculiar efficacy in propitiating the favor of heaven. A mysterious, magic influence w s ascribed to it. Even Chrysostom seems to have supposed that it rendered one invulnerable against the assaults of sin, and the shafts of Satan.[8] Accordingly it became to the clergy a convenient means, by which to impress upon the people a sense of the peculiar sanctity of their own office, and the importance of the blessings which the people might receive at

[8] Imo vero, mihi ne commodes horas duas, sed tibi ipsi, ut ex oratione patrium aliquam consolatione, percipias, ut benedictionibus plenus recedas, ut omni exparte securus abeas, ut spiritualibus acceptis armis invictus diabolo et inexpregnabilis fias.—*Cited by Siegel, Handbuch*, Vol. II. S. 3.

their hands. Even kings reverently bowed to receive the benediction of the bishops, who, especially, were not slow to take advantage of this popular impression, and early claimed the exclusive right of blessing the people. The subordinate clergy, having been duly consecrated by them, were permitted, in their absence and as their representatives, to pronounce the benediction upon the people. Still the act was virtually that of the bishops. *Qui facit per alium facit per se.* So that all clerical grace centred in the bishop; and from him, through his clergy, descended upon the people of his diocese.[9] In this way the rite became the means of exalting the office of the bishop, and of inspiring the people with profound reverence for him and his official character.

2. The sacerdotal benediction was soon perverted from its original and simple use, and bestowed on various occasions, upon a great variety of persons.

If the clerical benediction was attended with such consequences to the people in their religious assemblies, it was natural to expect the same effects upon different classes of persons. Catechumens, accordingly, and candidates for baptism, energumens, penitents, etc., became the separate subjects of this rite. Persons of every description and condition pressed to receive the blessing of the priest. Even in the age of Constantine this rage for the blessing of the clergy was forcibly manifested in its manifold applications to different classes of persons.[10] To what a pitch of extravagant

[9] J. H. Böhmer, Jus. Protestant, Lib. 3. vit. 40. § 14 and 41.

[10] Gretser gives the following instances, among many others, to show in what estimation the blessing of the priest was held. Cum S. Epiphanius episcopus Salaminae Cypri Hierosolymis versaretur, *omnis aetatis et sexus turba confluebat offerens parvulas* (ad benedictionem) *pedes deosculans, fimbrias vellens, ita ut gradum promovere non valens, in uno loco vix fluctus undantis populi sustineret*, Vol. V. p. 190. So also the venerable Bede, in his Hist. Eccl. Lib. 3. c. 26. In magna erat veneratione tempore illo religionis habitus, ita ut ubicunque clericus aliquis aut monculius adveniret, gaudenter ab omnibus, tanquam Dei famulus exciperetur, et jam si in itinere pergens

folly and superstition it afterwards arose, is sufficiently manifest in the rituals, missals, and agenda of the Romish church.

3. The perversions of this religious rite afford another illustration of the consequences of a departure from the simplicity and spirituality which become the worship of God.

Possessed with the idea that clerical grace belonged to the ecclesiastical order, and might be imparted to another by their benediction, men sought this blessing on many, and often on frivolous occasions. It became an essential rite in almost all the ordinances of religion, and was pronounced upon all classes of persons. It also became essentially the consecrating act by which men were inducted into the different orders and offices of the church. If clerical consecration gave a religious sanctity to men, so might it also to whatever else was to be set apart to a religious use. Hence the consecration, not only of the bread and wine of the eucharist, but of the church, the altar, the bell, the organ, the holy water, the baptismal water, and of almost everything that belonged to the sanctuary, or could be employed in its service.

If the blessing of heaven could in this manner be imparted to man, so might it be also to his fields, his flocks, his herds, and whatever else might be employed or improved for his benefit. Indeed it would be difficult to say, what class of men, or what amidst all that is devoted to the service of man, has not at some time been the subject of sacerdotal benediction.[11]

inveniretur accurrebant, et flexa cervice, vel manu signari vel ore illius se benedici gaudebant.—*Cited by Gretser*, as above.

[11] The Gregorian Sacramentary, for example, specifies the following particulars in which the benediction of the priest was pronounced,—Benedictio domus—et novae domus.—Putei—Uvae vel favi—Ad fruges novas—Ad omnia quae volueris—Crinis novae—Agni et aliarum carnium—Casei et ovorum—Ad quemcunque fructum novarum arborum—Peregrinantium, itenerantium. To which many things have been added, such as Navis—Armorum, ensis, pilei et vexilli, Turris, Thalami conjugalis, sepulchri, etc.

When once the mind has taken its departure from the great principles of religion, which, whether relating to faith or practice, are few and simple, it wanders, in endless mazes lost, uncertain where or upon what to settle, and be again at rest. So easy and natural, and so disastrous withal, is the descent of the human mind, from that which is inward and spiritual in religion, and pure and simple in its manifestation, to that which is outward and formal.

4. The foregoing considerations suggest another strong objection to prelacy;—its tendency to superstition.

It is indeed a besetting sin in man, to give a mis-direction to his religious feelings, by a veneration for unworthy objects, or by an *inordinate* reverence for what is really venerable in religion. Every religious ceremony, however appropriate, is liable to degenerate into a mere form, and consequently to encourage superstition. But this danger is immensely increased by the multiplication of rites and forms. The attention given to them soon becomes inordinate, extravagant, superstitious. The tendency to superstition increases in proportion to the number and insignificance of the objects which are thus invested with religious veneration. And is there not much in the Episcopal system, to create and foster such a tendency? This profound veneration for saints and saints' days, and for things that have been the subject of Episcopal consecration, this punctilious observance of festivals and fasts, this scrupulous adherence to the rubric, and the letter of the prayer-book, this anxious attention to clerical costume, to attitudes and postures,—what is it all but superstition? giving a religious importance to that which has nothing to do with heartfelt and practical religion? Even the bishop of London in a late charge, while he professedly condemns the Oxford superstitions, expresses great anxiety that the rubric should be closely adhered to, wishes all his clergy to preach *in white*, sees "no harm," in two wax candles, *provided they are not lighted;* and approves of the arrangement "lately adopted

in several churches, by which the clergyman looks to the *south* while reading prayers, and to the *west* while reading lessons!"

5. Episcopacy encourages, indirectly, if it does not directly inculcate, the notion of a *vicarious religion.*

Ancient prelacy transformed the minister of Christ, under the gospel dispensation, into a Levitical priest. By this means the Christian religion was changed into something more resembling Judaism or Paganism, than Christianity. The priesthood became a distinct order, created by the appointment of God and invested with high prerogatives as a vicarious propitiatory ministry *for* the people;—the constituted medium of communicating grace from God to man.[12] The nature of the sacraments was changed. The sacramental table became an *altar*, and the contributions of the people an *offering* to the Lord. Papacy has held firmly to this doctrine of a vicarious religion down to the present time. Indeed no small share of the corruptions of that "mystery of iniquity," originated in its false idea of the Christian ministry.

Protestantism at the Reformation was but half divorced from this delusion, and indications of its existence are still manifest in Protestant Episcopacy. The very name of "*priest*" is carefully retained; one of the second order of the clergy is not a minister, a presbyter, a pastor, in the ritual, but always a "*priest.*" The bishop is a reverend, or right reverend "father in God." And then that clerical grace which flows only through this appointed channel of communication between God and man, the grace that is given by the imposition of the bishop's hands, the grace imparted to regenerate the soul in baptism, the grace that establishes the soul and seals the covenant in confirmation, the mysterious grace imparted in the benediction; provided always, that the act be duly solemnized by a priest divinely appointed and episcopally ordained,—verily, all these resemble more the minis-

[12] Sacerdos constituitur medius inter Deum et poplum.—*Th. Aquinas, Summa* 3. p. 22.

trations of the Levitical priesthood, than of the pastors and teachers whom Christ gave "for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry.[13]"

Momentous consequences followed from the substitution of a vicarious priesthood. No church without a bishop, apostolical succession, divine right, the exclusive validity of Episcopal ordination, baptismal regeneration, the mysterious efficacy of the sacraments, the grace of Episcopal benediction and confirmation;—truly these are awful mysteries; and they affect more or less the whole economy of grace. The natural and logical results of such a faith are seen in the movements of the Oxford Tractarians. The great object of these "unprotestantizing" reformers is, to re-instate in the church the prelatical ministry of other days, and to restore a vicarious religion with its endless absurdities and superstitions. Thus "the character of the church of Christ is changed. She is made to stand in the place of the Redeemer, whose work is marred. His atonement is incomplete, his righteousness insufficient. Ceremonies are multiplied, and the kingdom of God is no longer righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The office of the ministers is of course entirely changed and their true character lost. Thunders more awful than those of Sinai are heard. All is discouragement: the object of the Christian ministry in their hands being apparently to try how difficult, how painful, how uncertain the Christian's course can be made with that ministry, and how impossible without it!

"In a word, their steps are dark, their ministrations mysterious; suited rather to the office of a priest of some heathen mythology than of ambassadors from Christ, ministers of the everlasting gospel, whose feet are beautiful upon the mountains, as those that bring glad tidings, that publish peace.

[13] Behold almost a whole convention moving off in a body to prostrate themselves before their bishop, and receive his blessing. Such are the superstitions connected with the perversion of the benediction.

"The aspect which it wears towards those of other communions is fearful in the extreme. No purity of faith, no labor of love, no personal piety, no manifestation of the fruits of the Spirit, will avail anything. Though steadfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity, they pass not through the eye of this needle, and shall not see the kingdom of God."

The great evil of such a system is, that it is a religion of forms, of mysterious rites and awful prerogatives. Heaven in mercy save us from a religion which substitutes these things for the gospel of the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. To Episcopacy in any form, the one great objection which includes almost all others is this—it unavoidably, if not intentionally, encourages that besetting sin of man,—*the innate propensity to substitute the outward form for the inward spirit of religion.*

We close, therefore, this protracted view of the Government and Worship of the Primitive Church, with a deepened impression of the greatness of that wisdom from on high, which guided the apostles in adopting an organization so simple and at the same time so efficient in promoting those great ends for which the church of Christ was instituted; which also directed them in the establishment of those simple and impressive forms of worship, which most happily promote the spirituality and sincerity in the worship of God, that alone are well pleasing in his sight. Nor can we resist the conviction, that the substitution of the Episcopal government and worship for the apostolical, was an efficient if not the principal cause of that degeneracy and formality, which soon succeeded to the primitive spirituality and purity of the church. It began in the multiplication of church officers and ceremonies. Everything that could attract attention to religion by its pomp and ceremony was carefully brought to the aid of the church. It had been alleged by the heathen as an objection to the Christians, that they had no solemn rites, nothing attrac-

tive, nothing imposing to command the admiration of men. To obviate this objection and reconcile the heathen to the Christian religion, not a few even of these pagan rites, with a little variation, were incorporated into the rituals of the churches. After this fatal departure from the spirit of the gospel, the progress of declension exhibited in constantly increasing ostentation and formality, was easy and rapid. The elegant and forcible language of Robert Hall is the happiest expression which we can give to our view of this speedy and disastrous degeneracy. "The descent of the human mind, from the spirit to the letter, from what is vital and intellectual to what is ritual and external in religion, is the true source of idolatry and superstition in all the multifarious forms which they have assumed; and as it began early to corrupt the religion of nature, or more properly of patriarchal tradition, so it soon obscured the lustre and destroyed the simplicity of the Christian institute. In proportion as genuine devotion declined, the love of pomp and ceremony increased. The few and simple rites of Christianity were extolled beyond all reasonable bounds; new ones were invented, to which mysterious meanings were attached! till the religion of the New Testament became in process of time as insupportable as the Mosaic law."

APPENDIX.

THE reader will better understand the propriety of calling the Episcopal liturgy "an extract of the mass translated," by comparing some extracts from the Mass Book, with corresponding portions from the Book of Common Prayer. For the sake of comparison they are set in parallel columns.

FESTIVALS.

MASS BOOK.	PRAYER BOOK.
A Table of the Festivals, which are to be observed by all the Catholics of the U. States, according to the last Regulations of the Holy See.	*A Table of Feasts, to be observed in this Church, throughout the Year.*
All the Lord's days throughout the year.	All Sundays in the Year.
Circumcision.	The Circumcision of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Epiphany.	The Epiphany.
Purification.	The Conversion of St. Paul.
St. Matthias.	The Purification of the Blessed Virgin.
St. Joseph.	St. Matthias the Apostle.
Annunciation.	The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin.
St. Mark.	St. Mark the Evangelist.
St. Philip and St. James,	St. Philip and St. James, the Apostles.
Finding of the Cross.	The Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Nativity of St. John Baptist.	St. Barnabas.
St. Peter and St. Paul.	The Nativity of St. John the Baptist.
St. James.	St. Peter the Apostle.
St. Ann.	St. James the Apostle.
St. Lawrence.	St. Bartholomew the Apostle.
Assumption.	St. Matthew the Apostle.
St. Bartholomew.	St. Michael and all Angels.
Nativity of the Blessed Virgin.	St. Luke the Evangelist.
Exaltation of the Holy Cross.	St. Simon and St. Jude, the Apostles.
St. Matthew.	All Saints.
St. Michael.	St. Andrew the Apostle.
St. Luke.	St. Thomas the Apostle.
St. Simon and St. Jude.	
All Saints.	
All Souls.	
St. Andrew.	
Conception.	

MASS BOOK.	PRAYER BOOK.
St. Thomas.	The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Christmas.	
St. Stephen.	St. Stephen the Martyr.
St. John.	St. John the Evangelist.
Holy Innocents.	The Holy Innocents.
Easter Monday.	Monday and Tuesday in Easter-Week.
Easter Tuesday.	
Ascension Day.	Monday and Tuesday in Whitsun-Week.
Whitsun Monday.	
Whitsun Tuesday.	
Corpus Christi Day.	

FASTS.

The forty days of Lent.

The ember days at the four seasons, being the *Wednesday*, *Friday* and *Saturday*, of the first week in Lent; of Whitsun-week; after the 14th of *September;* and of the third week in Advent.

The Wednesdays and Fridays of all the four weeks of Advent.

The vigils or eves of Whitsunday; of the Saints Peter and Paul; of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin; of All Saints; and of Christmas day.

All Fridays throughout the year. The abstinence on Saturday is dispensed with, for the faithful throughout the United States, for the space of ten years (from 1833) except when a fast falls on Saturday.

Ash-Wednesday.

Good-Friday.

Other Days of Fasting; *on which the Church requires such a Measure of Abstinence, as is more especially suited to extraordinary Acts and Exercises of Devotion:*

The Season of Lent.

The Ember-days at the Four Seasons, being the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, after the first Sunday in Lent, the Feast of Pentecost, September 14, and December 13.

The three Rogation Days, being the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before Holy Thursday, or the Ascension of our Lord.

All the Fridays in the year, except Christmas-Day.

PREFACE.

It is truly meet, and just, right and available, that we always, and in all places, give thanks to thee, O holy Lord, Father Almighty, eternal God: Through Christ our Lord; by whom the Angels praise thy Majesty, the dominations adore it, the powers tremble before it, the heavens and the heavenly virtues, and blessed Seraphim, with common joy, glorify it: With whom we beseech thee, that we may be admitted to join our voices; saying in an humble manner:—

Dearly beloved brethren, the scripture moveth us, in sundry places to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness, and that we should not dissemble nor cloak them before the face of Almighty God, our heavenly Father, but confess them with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart; to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, by his infinite goodness and mercy. And although we ought, at all times, humbly to acknowledge our sins

MASS BOOK.

PRAYER BOOK.

before God; yet ought we chiefly so to do, when we assemble and meet together, to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his most holy word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul. Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are here present, to accompany me, with a pure heart and humble voice, unto the throne of the heavenly grace, saying:—

[The Lord's Prayer often repeated.]

[The same wearisome repetitions.]

Gloria Patri.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

Gloria Patri.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be world without end.

["By this rubric," say the Commissioners of 1661, "the Gloria Patri is appointed to be said six times ordinarily, in every morning and evening service, frequently eight times in the morning and sometimes ten; which, we think carries with it, at least, an appearance of that *vain repetition* which Christ forbids."]

Venite, exultemus Domino.

Come let us praise the Lord with joy; let us joyfully sing to God our Saviour. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and let us make a jubilation to him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all Gods; *for the Lord will not reject his people.* For in his hands are all the ends of the earth; and the heights of the mountains are his.

For the sea is his, and he made

Venite, exultemus Domino.

O come, let us sing unto the Lord, let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and show ourselves glad in him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God; and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are all the corners of the earth; and the strength of the hills is his also.

The sea is his, and he made it;

MASS BOOK.

it; and his hands have formed the dry land. Come let us adore and fall down before God; let us weep before the Lord that made us. For he is the Lord our God; and we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

To-day, if you shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts. As in the provocation, according to the day of temptation in the wilderness, where your fathers tempted me; they proved me, and saw my works.

Forty years long was I offended with that generation; and I said, these *men* always err in their hearts. And *they* have not known my ways; so I swore in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest.

Gloria in Excelsis.

Glory be to God on high, and peace on earth to men of good will; we praise thee; we bless thee; we adore thee; we glorify thee; we give thee thanks for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty: O Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father; who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; who takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; who sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only, O Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. *Amen.*

Te Deum laudamus.

Thee, Sovereign God, our grateful accents praise;

COMMON PRAYER.

and his hands prepared the dry land.

O come, let us worship and fall down; and kneel before the Lord, our Maker.

For he is the Lord our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; let the whole earth stand in awe of him.

For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth; and with righteousness to judge the world, and the people with his truth.

Gloria in Excelsis.

Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father have mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the Glory of God the Father. *Amen.*

Te Deum laudamus.

We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.

MASS BOOK.

We own thee, Lord, and bless thy wond'rous ways.
To thee, eternal Father, earth's whole frame
With loudest trumpets sound immortal fame.
Lord God of hosts! to thee the heav'nly pow'rs
With sounding anthems fill thy vaulted tow'rs:
Thy Cherubs, Holy, Holy, Holy cry;
Thrice, Holy, all the Seraphim reply.
Both heav'n and earth thy majesty display:
They owe their beauty to thy glorious ray.
Thy praises fill the loud Apostles' choir;
The train of Prophets in the song conspire;
Legions of Martyrs in the chorus shine;
And vocal blood with vocal music join.
By these thy Church, inspir'd with heav'nly art,
Around the world maintains a second part,
And tunes her sweetest notes, O God, to thee,
The Father of unbounded majesty,
The Son, ador'd co-partner of thy seat,
And equal, everlasting Paraclete.
Thou King of glory, Christ, of the Most High,
Thou co-eternal, filial Deity;
Thou, to save the world from impending doom,
Vouchsaf'st to dwell within a Virgin's womb;
Death thou hast conquer'd; from its fetters free,
The faithful in thy kingdom reign with thee.
At God's right hand, on a resplendent throne
Thou sitt'st; thy Father's glory is thy own.

COMMON PRAYER.

All the earth doth worship thee, the Father everlasting.

To thee all Angels cry aloud; the Heavens, and all the Powers therein.

To thee, Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry,

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.

Heaven and Earth are full of the Majesty of thy Glory.

The glorious company of the Apostles praise thee.

The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise thee.

The noble army of Martyrs praise thee.

The holy Church, throughout all the world, doth acknowledge thee,

The Father, of an infinite Majesty;

Thine adorable, true, and only Son;

Also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.

Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ.

Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.

When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man, thou didst humble thyself to be born of a Virgin.

When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

Thou sittest at the right hand of God, in the Glory of the Father.

We believe that thou shalt come to be our Judge.

We therefore pray thee, help thy servants, whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood.

Make them to be numbered with thy saints, in glory everlasting.

O Lord, save thy people, and bless thine heritage.

Govern them and lift them up for ever.

MASS BOOK.

Thou art to judge the living and the dead;
Then spare those souls for whom thy veins have bled.
O take us up amongst the bless'd above,
To share with them thy everlasting love.
Preserve, O Lord, thy people, and enhance
Thy blessing on thy own inheritance:
Forever raise their hearts, and rule their ways:
Each day we bless thee, and proclaim thy praise.
No age shall fail to celebrate thy name,
Nor hour neglect thy everlasting fame.
Preserve our souls, O Lord, this day from ill;
Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy still:
As we have hop'd, do thou regard our pain;
We've hop'd in thee; let not our hope be vain.

COMMON PRAYER.

And we worship thy name, ever, world without end.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.

O Lord, have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us.

O Lord, let thy mercy be upon us; as our trust is in thee.

O Lord, in thee have I trusted let me never be confounded.

Day by day we magnify thee,

The Benedicite, or Canticle of the Three Children. Daniel iii.

All ye works of the Lord, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all, forever.

O all ye angels of the Lord, bless the Lord; O ye heavens, bless the Lord.

O all ye waters that are above the heavens, bless the Lord; O all ye powers of the Lord bless the Lord.

O ye sun and moon, bless the Lord; O ye stars of heaven, bless the Lord.

Benedicite, omnia opera Domini.

O All ye Works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Angels of the Lord, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Heavens, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Waters that be above the Firmament, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O all ye Powers of the Lord, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Sun and Moon, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Stars of Heaven, bless ye

MASS BOOK.	COMMON PRAYER.
	the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.
O every shower and dew, bless ye the Lord; O all ye spirits of God, bless the Lord.	O ye Showers and Dew, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.
	O ye Winds of God, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.
O ye fire and heat, bless the Lord; O ye cold and heat, bless the Lord.	O ye Fire and Heat, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.
	O ye Winter and Summer, bless ye the Lord; praise him and magnify him for ever.
O ye dews and hoary frost, bless the Lord; O ye frost and cold bless the Lord.	O ye Dews and Frosts, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.
	O ye Frost and Cold, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.
O ye ice and snow, bless the Lord; O ye nights and days bless the Lord.	O ye Ice and Snow, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.
	O ye Nights and Days, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.
O ye light and darkness, bless the Lord; O ye lightnings and clouds, bless the Lord.	O ye Light and Darkness, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.
	O ye Lightnings and Clouds, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.
O let the earth bless the Lord; let it praise and exalt him above all, forever.	O let the Earth bless the Lord; yea, let it praise him, and magnify him for ever.
O ye mountains and hills, bless the Lord; O all ye things that spring up in the earth, bless the Lord.	O ye Mountains and Hills, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.
	O all ye green Things upon Earth, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.
O ye fountains bless the Lord; O ye seas and rivers, bless the Lord.	O ye Wells, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.
	O ye Seas and Floods, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.
O ye whales, and all that move in the waters, bless the Lord; O all ye fowls of the air, bless the Lord.	O ye Whales, and all that move in the Waters, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.

MASS BOOK.

O all ye beasts and cattle, bless the Lord; O ye sons of men bless the Lord.

O let Israel bless the Lord; let them praise him and exalt him above all, forever.

O ye priests of the Lord, bless the Lord; O ye servants of the Lord, bless the Lord.

O ye spirits and souls of the just, bless the Lord; O ye holy and humble of heart, bless the Lord.

O Ananias, Azarius, and Misael, bless ye the Lord; praise and exalt him above all, forever.

Let us bless the Father, and the Son, with the holy Ghost; let us praise him and magnify him forever.

Blessed art thou, O Lord, in the firmament of heaven, and worthy of praise, and glorious and magnified forever.

COMMON PRAYER.

O all ye Fowls of the Air, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O all ye Beasts and Cattle, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Children of Men, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O let Israel bless the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Priests of the Lord, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Servants of the Lord, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Spirits and Souls of the righteous, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye holy and humble Men of heart, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him for ever.

CREEDS.

The creeds are both taken entire from the Roman Catholic ritual.

The Apostles' Creed.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffer d under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried: he descended into hell: the third day he rose again from the dead. he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almigh-

The Apostles' Creed.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth:

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into Hell; The third day he rose from the dead: He ascended into Heaven, And sitteth on the right

MASS BOOK.

ty: from thence he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.—Amen.

The Nicene Creed.

I believe in one God, The Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things, visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God: and born of the Father before all ages; God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God; begotten, not made; consubstantial to the Father, by whom all things were made: who, for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost, of the Virgin *Mary*, and was made man: was crucified also for us, suffered under *Pontius Pilate*, and was buried; and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven; sitteth at the right hand of the Father; and shall come again with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; of whose kingdom there shall be no end.

And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who, together with the Father and the son, is adored and glorified; who spoke by the Prophets. And one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the remission of sins. And I expect the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. *Amen.*

COMMON PRAYER.

hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; The Holy Catholic Church; The communion of Saints; The forgiveness of sins; The resurrection of the body, And the life everlasting. *Amen.*

The Nicene Creed.

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from Heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost the Lord and giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the prophets. And I believe in one Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. *Amen.*

SALUTATION.

MASS BOOK.	COMMON PRAYER.
The Lord be with you; *Ans.* And with thy Spirit.	The Lord be with you; *Ans.* And with thy Spirit.

THE LITANY.

The Litany is little else than a transcript and amplification of the Roman Catholic Litany of the saints, blended with the Litany of Jesus.

Lord have mercy upon us. Christ have mercy upon us. Christ hear us. Christ listen to us.	
Father of heaven, God, have mercy upon us.	Oh God, the father of heaven, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners.
Oh God, the Son, redeemer of the world have mercy upon us.	Oh God, the Son, redeemer of the world, have mercy upon us miserable sinners.
O God, the Holy Ghost, have mercy upon us.	O God, the holy Ghost, proceeding from the father and the Son, have mercy upon us miserable sinners.
Holy trinity, one God, have mercy upon us.	O holy, blessed, and glorious trinity, three persons and one God, have mercy upon us miserable sinners.
Holy Mary, pray for us. Holy mother of God pray for us. Saint Michael pray for us, etc.	
Be gracious to us, spare us Lord.	Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers; neither take thou vengeance of our sins.
Be gracious to us, hear us, God.	Spare us, good Lord spare thy people, whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood, and be not angry with us forever;
From all evil; *Deliver us Lord.*	*Spare us, Good Lord.*
From all sin; *Deliver us.*	From all evil and mischief, from sin; from the crafts and assaults of the devil, from thy wrath, and from everlasting damnation;
From thy wrath; *Deliver us.*	*Good Lord deliver us.*
From sudden and unprovided death; *Deliver us.*	From all blindness of heart, from pride, vain glory, and hypocrisy, from envy, hatred and malice, and all uncharitableness;
From the snares of the devil; *Deliver us.*	*Good Lord deliver us.*
From wrath, hatred and all evil desires; *Deliver us.*	From all inordinate and sinful affections, from all the deceits of
From the spirit of fornication; *Deliver us.*	

MASS BOOK.

From lightning and tempest;
Deliver us.
From everlasting death;
Deliver us.

By the mystery of thy holy incarnation; *Deliver us.*
By thine advent;
Deliver us.
By thy nativity;
Deliver us.
By thy baptism and holy fasting; *Deliver us.*
By thy cross and passion;
Deliver us Lord.
By thy death and burial;
Deliver us Lord.
By thine admirable resurrection; *Deliver us.*
By the coming of the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete;
Deliver us.
In the day of judgment;
Deliver us.

We sinners beseech thee to hear us.
That thou wouldst spare;
We beseech thee.
That thou wouldst deign to lead us to true repentance;
We beseech thee.
That thou wouldst deign to grant peace and true concord to christian kings and princes;
We beseech thee.

That thou wouldst deign to preserve the apostolical master, and all the ecclesiastical ranks in our sacred religion;
We beseech thee to hear us.
That thou wouldst deign to humble all the enemies of the holy church;
We beseech thee to hear us.

COMMON PRAYER.

the world, the flesh, and the devil;
Good Lord deliver us.
From lightning and tempest, from plague, pestilence and famine, from battle and murder, and from sudden death;
Good Lord deliver us.
By the mystery of thy holy incarnation, by thy holy nativity, and circumcision, by thy baptism, fasting and temptation;
Good Lord deliver us.

By thine agony and bloody sweat, by thy cross and passion, by thy precious death and burial, by thy glorious resurrection and ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost.
Good Lord deliver us.
In all time of our tribulation, in all time of our prosperity, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgement;
Good Lord deliver us.
We sinners, do beseech thee to hear us, O Lord God, and that it may please thee to rule and govern thy holy church universal, in the right way;
We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord.
That it would please thee to bless and preserve all Christian rulers and magistrates: giving them grace to execute justice and to maintain truth;
We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord.
That it would please thee to illuminate all bishops, priests and deacons with true knowledge and understanding of thy word, that both by their preaching and living they may set it forth and show it accordingly;
We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord.

MASS BOOK.	COMMON PRAYER.
That thou wouldst deign to lavish on the whole christian people, peace and unity, we beseech thee.	That it may please thee to bless and keep all thy people; *We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord.* That it may please thee to give to all nations unity, peace and concord; *We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord.*
Son of God, we beseech thee.	Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us.
O Lamb of God who takest away the sins of the world; *Spare us, Lord.*	Oh Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.
Oh Lamb of God who takest away the sins of the world, listen to us, Lord.	Oh Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
Oh Lamb of God who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.	
Oh Christ hear us.	Oh Christ, hear us.
Lord, have pity on us.	Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have pity on us.	Christ have mercy upon us.
Lord, have pity on us.	Lord have mercy upon us.

The Episcopal church not only observes almost all of the holy days, festivals and fasts of the Roman Catholic Church, but it copies from the "Mass book" with little variation many of the collects and lessons for those days.

The Epiphany.	*The Epiphany.*
O God, who by the direction of a star, didst this day manifest thy only Son to the Gentiles; mercifully grant that we, who now know thee by faith, may come, at length, to see the glory of thy majesty; through the same Jesus Christ, etc.	O God, who by the leading of a Star didst manifest thy only begotten Son to the Gentiles; mercifully grant that we, who know thee now by faith, may after this life have the fruition of thy glorious Godhead, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*
First Sunday after Epiphany	*First Sunday after Epiphany.*
According to thy divine mercy, O Lord, receive the vows of thy people, who pour forth their prayers to thee; that they may know what their duty requireth of them, and be able to comply with what they know; through Jesus Christ, thy Son, etc.	O Lord, we beseech thee mercifully to receive the prayers of thy people who call upon thee; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

MASS BOOK.

Second Sunday after Epiphany.

O Almighty and eternal God, Supreme Ruler both of heaven and earth, mercifully give ear to the prayers of thy people, and grant us peace in our time; through Jesus Christ thy Son, our Lord, etc.

Third Sunday after Epiphany.

O almighty and eternal God, mercifully regard our weakness, and stretch forth the right hand of thy majesty to protect us; through Jesus Christ, etc.

Septuagesima.

Mercifully hear, we beseech thee, O Lord, the prayers of thy people; that we, who are justly afflicted for our sins, may mercifully be delivered, for the glory of thy name; through Jesus Christ, etc.

Third Sunday after Easter.

O God, who showest the light of thy truth to such as go astray, that they may return to the way of righteousness; grant that all who profess the Christian name, may forsake whatever is contrary to that profession, and closely pursue what is agreeable to it; through, etc.

Trinity Sunday.

O almighty and everlasting God who hast granted thy servants, in the confession of the true faith, to acknowledge the glory of an eternal Trinity, and, in the pow-

COMMON PRAYER.

Second Sunday after Epiphany.

Almighty and everlasting God, who dost govern all things in heaven and earth; mercifully hear the supplications of thy people, and grant us thy peace all the days of our life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Third Sunday after Epiphany.

Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmities, and in all our dangers and necessities stretch forth thy right hand to help and defend us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Septuagesima.

O Lord, we beseech thee favorably to hear the prayers of thy people, that we who are justly punished for our offences, may be mercifully delivered by thy goodness, for the glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Third Sunday after Easter.

Almighty God, who showest to them that are in error the light of thy truth, to the intent that they may return into the way of righteousness; grant unto all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, that they may avoid those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Trinity-Sunday.

Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given unto us thy servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and

MASS BOOK.

er of majesty, to adore an Unity; we beseech thee, that by the strength of this faith we may be defended from all adversity; through, etc.

St. Michael, the Archangel.

O God, who by a wonderful order, has regulated the employments of angels and men; grant that those, who are always ministering before thee in heaven, may defend our lives here on earth; through Jesus Christ, etc.

Preface on Ascension day.

It is truly meet, and just, right, and available, that we always, and in all places, give thanks to thee, O holy Lord, Father Almighty, eternal God; through Christ our Lord; who, after his resurrection, manifested himself to all his Disciples, and in their presence ascended into heaven, to make us partakers of his divinity. And therefore with the Angels and Archangels, with the thrones and dominations, and with all the militia of the heavenly host, we sing the hymn of thy glory; saying, without end:

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth. The heavens and the earth are full of thy glory. Hosannah in the highest. Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord. Hosannah in the highest.

COMMON PRAYER.

in the power of the divine Majesty to worship the Unity; we beseech that thou wouldest keep us steadfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities, who livest and reignest, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Saint Michael and all Angels.

O Everlasting God, who hast ordained and constituted the services of Angels and men in a wonderful order; mercifully grant, that as thy holy Angels always do thee service in heaven; so by thy appointment, they may succor and defend us on earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Preface on Ascension day.

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, [Holy Father,] Almighty everlasting God.

Through thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who, after his most glorious resurrection, manifestly appeared to all his apostles, and in their sight ascended up into heaven, to prepare a place for us; that where he is, thither we might also ascend, and reign with him in glory:

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name; evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory: Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High. *Amen.*

In making the above comparison, we have only used the Mass Book or Roman Catholic Manual in common use in the United States. But we have seen enough to illustrate the po[redacted] character of the liturgy of the Episcopal church. To

what extent this comparison might be carried by reference to all the liturgical books of the Roman Catholics, we are not informed. But the commissioners who formed the Book of Common Prayer, under Edward VI, with Archbishop Cranmer at their head, themselves declare, that "everything sound and valuable in the Romish Missal and Breviary was transferred by them without scruple, to the English Communion Service and to the Common Prayer." The commissioners who were appointed by Charles II, A. D. 1661 to revise the liturgy also say, "We humbly desire that it may be considered that our first reformers, out of their great wisdom, did at that time compose the liturgy so as to *win upon the papists and to draw them into their church communion*, BY VERGING AS LITTLE AS THEY COULD FROM THE ROMISH FORMS BEFORE IN USE."

From the first introduction of the English liturgy in 1548, there was a steady return to the superstitions of Popery. So that the Papists themselves boasted "that the book was a compliance with them in a great part of their service; so were not a little confirmed in their superstition and idolatry, expecting rather a return to them, than endeavoring the reformation of themselves." This return to the Popish service became so striking in the reign of Elizabeth, that a body of divines was appointed by the Lords in 1641, to take into consideration certain "Innovations in the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England." Among the "innovations in discipline" are enumerated the following:

"1. The turning of the holy table altar-wise, and most commonly calling it *altar*.

"2. Bowing towards it, or towards the East, many times, with three congees, etc.

"3. Advancing candlesticks in many churches upon the altar so called.

"4. In making canopies over the altar, so called, with traverses and curtains on each side and before it.

"5. In compelling all communicants to come up before the rails, and there to receive.

"6. In advancing crucifixes and images upon the altar-cloth so called.

"7. In reading some part of Morning Prayer at the holy table when there is no communion celebrated.

"8. By the minister's turning his back to the West, and his

face to the East, when he pronounceth the creed, or reads prayers.

"9. By pretending for their innovations the injunctions and advertisements of Queen Elizabeth, which are not in force, etc.

"10. By prohibiting a direct prayer before sermon, and bidding of prayer."

In addition to the above "innovations" exceptions are made to the change in the vestments of the clergy, to the sign of the cross in baptism, to the absolution of the sick and the burial service—"the sure and certain hope of resurrection to eternal life."

The intelligent reader cannot fail to notice the striking similarity, we might almost say the *perfect identity* of these innovations with those which the Puseyite party are renewing in the Episcopal church. What is all this mighty movement of that party but another revival of Popish superstition? It is another return to Popery; another sad illustration of the strong affinities which have ever subsisted between the church of England and the church of Rome.

"Of all Protestant churches," remarks the learned author of Horae Biblicae, himself a distinguished civilian and a Roman Catholic, "the National church of England most nearly resembles the church of Rome. It has retained much of the dogma, and much of the discipline of Roman Catholics. Down to the sub-deacon it has retained the whole of their hierarchy; and, like them, has its deans, rural deans, chapters, prebends, archdeacons, rulers and vicars; a liturgy, taken in a great measure, from the Roman Catholic liturgy, and composed like that, of Psalms, Canticles, the three Creeds, Litanies, Gospels, Epistles, prayers and responses. Both churches have the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, the absolution of the sick, the burial service, the sign of the cross in baptism, the reservation of confirmation, and order [ordination] to bishops, the difference of Episcopal and sacerdotal dress, feasts and fasts."

We know indeed that the Articles of the Church of England strongly protest against the errors of Popery, and assert the doctrines of the Reformation. And this is another verification of the famous declaration of Lord Chatham, that the Church of England has "a Calvinistic creed, a Popish liturgy, and an Arminian clergy."

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